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THE LATINA/O/X UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE:

NAVIGATING RACISM, EXCLUSION, AND COUNTER-FRAMING

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates the transitional and educational activities of undergraduate Latina/o/x university students attending historically or traditionally white university and college campuses. Based on student narratives, it examines the effects of racial discrimination and racial inequality on Latinx academic achievement. The first set of data utilizes in-depth semi-structured interviews to provide insight into the racialized experiences of Latinx students. The sample group consists of approximately 60 undergraduate Latinx students at a single predominantly white institution (PWI). Nine themes emerged from the collected data: (1) complexities and ambiguities with social support, (2) the integration of university knowledge, (3) racism on-campus, (4) negotiating identities with friends, (5) skills obtained as counter-frame, (6) Spanish language as counter-frame, (7) placating whites as counter-framing, (8) encountering everyday white racism, and (9) overtly challenging white supremacy. The data is further contextualized within the current student protest movement.

The second set of data includes a content analyzes of 78 student of color demands from colleges and universities across North America. Those findings cover: (1) new hires and retention: faculty and staff of color, (2) racial awareness curriculum, (3) campus life: space and place, and (4) solutions and training: programs and cultural awareness. These findings combined with the qualitative experiences of Latinx are situated in a larger discussion about racism on and off campus. This area of research demands further analysis to address the various means by which Latinxs experience

college and use counter-framing to achieve a variety of goals. As Latinx college enrollment increases, investigating Latinx student transitional experiences, leisure activities, and responses to discrimination will lead to a better understanding of the overall Latinx college experience particularly in the confines of PWIs.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my partner/wife/lover Cindy Ramos Ortega, my mother Roberta A. Ortega, daughter Gabriela Izel Ortega, and grandmother Elizabeth Gonzales. This project would not have materialized without their unyielding love, encouragement, affection, patience, and understanding.

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NOMENCLATURE

POC	People of Color
SOC	Students of Color
PWI	Predominantly White Institution
SU	Southern University

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation intends to uncover the educational experiences and patterns of undergraduate Latina/o/x[1] students at predominantly white institutions (PWIs). This area of study requires additional in-depth analysis that will help university administrators and student support service workers understand the transition, activity choices, academic achievement, and collegiate experiences of Latina/o/x students. Despite their multicultural rhetoric, PWIs continue to be sites of exclusion where students of color (SOC) encounter racial hostility on a daily basis. This dissertation relies on student narratives to exemplify the racialized atmosphere maintained on historically white universities across the United States. Many Latinx students find themselves in an unwelcoming atmosphere that fundamentally rejects their unique perspectives and experiences. Many students of color are forced to conform to white normative standards in order to survive, prosper, and graduate college. There are numerous consequences associated with conformity and racial oppression. Latinx students often pay material, psychological, emotional, social, and physical costs in the form of covert and overt racism including: isolation, embarrassment, denigration, frustration, poor academic

[1] The label *Latinx* pays tribute and recognizes the LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual) Latino communities. I use Latina/o/x and Latinx in place of Afro-Latino, Chicana, Chicano, Chican@, Xicana, Xicano, XicanX, Latino, Latina, Latin@, and other national identifiers. The "x" counters heteronormative patriarchal standards of personhood including gender and sexual identity. Latinx challenges binary identities (man-woman) and acknowledges agender, nonbinary, hard femme, gender non-conforming, genderqueer, transgender, genderfluid, and other groups. Although casting groups of people under one umbrella term is problematic in itself; Latinx is an attempt to challenge the historical and social legacy of colonialism, imperialism, and normative masculinity. It is also important to contextualize "Latinx" against white constructs of indigenous and gender identity and the erasure and recapture of indigeneity. I also note that the vast majority of participants in this study are of Mexican descent. In this study, individual participants are introduced by their own self-identification.

performance, being pushed out, lack of networking, rejection of their home culture, depression, fatigue, internalizing self-hate, squandering time and money, and missing future job prospects (Arbona and Jimenez, 2014; Franklin et al., 2014; Robertson et al., 2014; Villegas-Gold and Yoo, 2014; Ojeda et al. 2012; Solórzano et al. 2005).

Latinx students enter this legacy of white supremacy with hopes of attaining a college degree but often face academic and social challenges based on their ethnic and racial background. Under these conditions Latinx college enrollment has steadily increased; "a record seven-in-ten (69%) Hispanic high school graduates in the class of 2012 enrolled in college that fall, two percentage points higher than the rate (69%) among their white counterparts" (Pew Hispanic Center report, 2013: 4). However, these promising statistics only reveal a partial understanding of Latina/o college enrollment. The same report also reveals that Latinx students are "less likely than their white counterparts" to enroll in a four-year college, attend a selective college, enroll full time, and complete a bachelor's degree (Pew Hispanic Center, 2013: 5). College enrollment does not tell the entire story. As Solórzano et al. (2005) points out, "There actually appears to be a decline in their graduation rates given that these rates have not kept pace with their population increase" (286). Clearly, the lack of Latinx college graduates has a severe economic and social impact on U.S. society in terms of job loss, potential mentors for future scholars, and professionals (Solórzano et al. 2005).

Racial politics have diverted attention away from critical discussions pertaining to higher education and have continued to fail Latinx students. The individual educational inequities of Latinx students reflect the greater systemic failure of

educational reform. I argue that the growth of Latinx college enrollment, low transfer rates to 4-year universities, and poor retention and graduation rates at 4-year colleges can be further understood within the context of student experiences, transitions, activities and everyday lived realities. I ask several general questions to guide this dissertation project, what types of racialized experiences do Latinx undergraduate students have inside and outside the classroom? How does race influence their educational student attainment? How do students navigate college life at predominantly white universities? And what are the specific demands of students of color across the U.S.? This dissertation addresses the transitionary, leisure activities, and the student protest movement to better understand the academic performances of the growing Latinx student community.

Latinx students engage in various extracurricular activities for a variety of reasons, and their activity choices are tied to their academic performance. Their academic success is affected by the racial climate of the university (Moore 2008; Solórzano et al. 2002). Revealing the lived experiences of these students will help university officials implement policies and programs that more effectively achieve diversity on college campuses. Policy makers and university administrators need to establish services designed to sustain a commitment to improving Latinx student admission, retention, and completion percentages. The type of transitory experiences, activities, and counter-frames in which students experience not only speaks to their overall problematic social location in white institutional spaces, but also helps them traverse their way through an often racially charged college experience. Taking a structural/systemic approach to understanding the processes of racialization faced by

these upwardly mobile Latinxs, I intend to uncover power dynamics based on institutional racism, white supremacy, white privilege, and ultimately the subjugation of Latinxs who have thus far succeeded academically.

The Latinx participants in this study face a daily onslaught of racism despite making it to the white coded middleclass space of their competitive flagship state University. Students of color are a threat to whites and to their dominance and control at PWIs. This means that Latinx's everyday interpretations of the space will be coded by these daily oppressions, comments, and violence. Examining how they "cope" with these systemic and everyday forms of racism is crucial to understanding how white supremacy is not mitigated by middleclass status, good grades, or school spirit. Instead I will show that the nuances of space, location, agency, activities, and racialization significantly impact how Latinx undergraduate college students navigate and challenge predominantly white institutions.

Latinx students at Southern University (SU) engaged in a variety of activities that help them navigate their way through the college experience. Yet, Latinx students often face racial hostility even while performing in extracurricular or leisure activities. These activities are also spaces and locations were Latinx students can express their culture and relieve tension from racial oppression and the pressures of being a college student. Examining the transitionary experiences and leisure activities are important social dynamics that can help explain structural inequalities in society. Latinx students participate in a wide range of activities and the variation in their choice of activities reflect the diversity within the Latinx community. One of the limitations in this study

underscores the difficulties concerning generalizability. Although the number of participants in this dissertation are significant the sample is located at a single site and do not speak for the entire Latinx community. Although the Latinx community is complex and diverse these findings are consistent with similar studies and echo the effects of race and racism in the U.S.

Higher Education and Latinxs

The sociology of higher education specifically the study of inequalities and stratification cover a wide range of institutional processes, ideologies, organizational, economic, and political interests. This research contributes to the field of higher education by focusing on the individual and institutional level. For example, paying for college is perhaps the number one concern among future college and university students. Affordability remains a barrier to many students and yet the mainstream narratives about educational inequalities rarely discuss the intersections of race, class, and gender. Racial inequality and racial discrimination are ongoing matters that educators must pay attention to if they are to prevent racism and create places of learning, tolerance, and open-mindedness (Feagin, 2002). This dissertation study critically examines the institution of higher education through the individual and collective experiences of students of color. The patterns, experiences, and lived realities of Latinx students are analyzed to explore in more depth the institutional inequities that permeate higher education.

Many historically or predominantly white college and university campuses routinely fail students of color. Their everyday realities are often filled with racism,

exclusion, and marginalization, running counter to the progressive ideals of the university. The Latinx students in this study testify to the serious racial barriers that continue to exist on college and university campuses. Latinx students regularly survive, challenge, resist, and experience racial discrimination on college and universities campuses across the U.S. (Obiakor and Martinez, 2016; Minikel-Lacocque, 2015; Garrod, Kilkenny, and Gómez, 2007). Given current demographic trends, Latinxs and other students of color must be able to access higher education otherwise the social system will cease to exist in current form. Business as usual or status quo educational systems will not suffice and institutions of higher learning must reflect emerging multicultural and multiracial communities. Therefore, it is imperative that colleges and universities understand that Latinx are the present and future of higher education not only as students but staff, faculty, and administrator workers.

Social forces related to access to space, racial hostility, microaggressions, overt and covert racism, and other forms of oppression continue to impact student's educational journey. Researchers and educational practitioners must identify educational inequalities and racial discrimination in order to capture the voices, needs, and interests of neglected and marginal groups. McDonough and Fann (2007: 82) call for research inquiries that examine educational inequalities at both the individual, organizational, and field level, "we need to shift paradigms more frequently to a field perspective that investigates the interconnectivity and interdependencies of inequalities" (McDonough and Fann, 2007: 82). Investigating, critiquing, and challenging these interlocking systems of oppression are essential to recruiting, retaining, and graduating Latinx

students. Educators must better understand how social forces contribute to the educational pathways of Latinx undergraduate students in order to provide them with adequate social and academic support.

Racial issues on and off campus remain foundational to the higher education and Ignoring race or taking a colorblind approach to race in higher education reinforces racial stereotyping and biases. Real conversations surrounding race and microaggressions are needed to counter negative perceptions of students of color. However, when policies are enacted to increase recruitment and admission rates for students of color, whites often push back. Affirmative action for example was implemented to off-setting exclusionary admission practices, yet, whites have often framed SOC as unqualified and undeserving and continue to vigorously fight against programs intended to equalizing the playing field. Ironically white women are the major beneficiaries of affirmative action programs. Moreover, students of color have demanded that textbooks and coursework challenge rather than reproduce Eurocentric ideologies, histories, and culture. Culturally relevant pedagogical practices are essential to overcoming white hegemony in higher education. Many Latinx students have opted to attend historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic serving institutions (HSI) rather than feel uncomfortable and unwanted at a PWI. However, these campuses often face funding challenges that make daily operations a struggle and some are even forced to shut down. These issues along with bilingual education, selective institutions, immigration, and undocumented students (DREAMers) are serious factors that impact the success of Latinx undergraduate students.

Universities and colleges must take a proactive approach to fixing the racial problem on and off campus. Schools should incorporate diversity programs that go beyond lip service and create curriculum that covers topics on race students would otherwise not be exposed to during their academic careers. For example, ethnic studies departments and courses can offer alternative narratives to POC inferiority. Centering the experiences of students of color also helps students in other courses, attendance, and conscious raising. Ethnic studies also benefit white students learn about their white privilege, the histories of people of color, and ability to combat racism. Traditionally or historically white universities and colleges would boost their reputation among communities of color if they hire additional faculty of color, recruit students of color, offer concentrated courses on the experiences of POC, and work with the community.

This dissertation reveals and centers the racialized experiences, transitionary, activities, and counter-frames of Latinx undergraduate students and the subsequent spaces they create and maintain while on white campuses. Additional inquiry concerning group identity, language usage, appropriation, and resistance are needed to recognize the need to address educational diversity, racial microaggressions, and substandard college attendance, retention, and graduation rates. Empirical data will validate the importance of examining student transitions, activities, and resistance in conjunction with the academic achievement of Latinx. Continued research in this area will contribute to the overall understanding and therefore improvement success of the educational attainment of Latinx in colleges and universities throughout the U.S. and truly live up to American ideals of liberty, justice, and equality.

Research Questions

An analysis of Latinx undergraduate college students will add to the literature on Latina/o/x education and race. There are relatively few studies that discuss how students contend, endure, and resist white racism on campus and the role racial oppression has in creating, reproducing, and sustaining inequalities in higher education. This dissertation study is designed to expand the literature about the impact of institutionalized oppression on the lived reality of Latinxs. The research question directing this investigation is; how does race impact the present-day educational experiences and counter-framing of Latinx students at a predominantly white university in the southwest? This question captures the macro-level structural processes, while also addressing micro-level interactions. This study also investigates larger sociological issues, specifically the influence of social forces, e.g. politics and capitalism, on the discourse, performance, and symbolic representation of race, ethnicity, gender, class, and culture.

Simply put this research aims to better understand the educational realities of Latinx undergraduate students. The set of specific research questions that will help foster a wider understanding of Latinx in higher education focus on race, racial identity, and responses to racism: (1) How are symbolic forms of racism and racial microaggressions coded in the everyday experiences of Latinx students? (2) What activities do Latinx students engage in to resist as well as assimilate into institutional policies and campus cultures that effectively racialize and marginalize them, particularly across ethnicity, class, and gender? (3) How do Latinx students use counter-framing to resist racism embedded in structural factors (e.g. education programs, admissions policies,

curriculum, and whiteness) that contribute to injurious outcomes? The purpose of these three questions is to find out how Latinx are incorporated into society, the middleclass, and U.S. culture. These questions also address the narratives that shape the experiences of Latinx within the university system. This sociological investigation of education will also contribute to a better and more comprehensive understanding of Latinx student experiences – a critical element in the Latinx community.

Chapter Overview

The chapters provide an overview of the status of Latinx and SOC undergraduate students through personal narratives and student demands. Recommendations for policy, programs, and institutional best practices are presented to address widening inequalities in higher education. The proceeding chapter (two) describes the theoretical framework and literature relevant to the study of racial oppression and racial discrimination as it pertains to Latinxs in higher education. The literature highlights the permanence of racism, narratives of racial inferiority, institutional racism, and student counter-framing. The third chapter provides an overview of the methodology approaches, data collection, and analysis of the data. There are two sets of data utilized in this dissertation study: (1) student narratives and (2) student demands. The student interviews were analyzed using thematic narrative analysis in order to capture the student's stories and lived experiences. The student demands were analyzed using a textual content analysis that revealed issues relevant to their lived realities and solutions given to address racial inequalities.

The findings of this study were divided into three points of emphasis. Essentially this dissertation traces the racial awareness of Latinx undergraduate students as they

enter white institutional spaces, experience racism, and challenge the prevailing social interpretations of their racialized bodies. The three core chapters (4-6) follow a logical path: transition to college, experiences at college, and resisting/counter-framing discrimination. The fourth and fifth chapters rely on the educational narratives of Latinx students as they traverse a predominantly white university in the South. The sample group consists of approximately 60 undergraduate Latinx students at a single predominantly white institution (PWI). Chapter four focuses on the cultural and structural influences present as Latinx undergraduate student's transition from home-culture to campus-culture. Four themes were generated from the data: (1) complexities and ambiguities with social support, (2) the integration of university knowledge, (3) racism on-campus, (4) negotiating identities with friends. It is also important to note that nearly all the students in this study are experiencing life away from home for the first time.

The findings from chapter four are further contextualized in chapter five which explores and expoundes on the racialization of Latinx students including their activities (e.g. student organizations, recreational, and leisure). The fifth chapter examines the activities students engage in as they attend a predominantly white university. Students simultaneously encounter racism while participating in various activities and use activities, skills, and space to counter racism. Five themes emerged from the collected data: (1) skills obtained as counter-frame, (2) Spanish language as counter-frame, (3) placating whites as counter-framing, (4) encountering everyday white racism, and (5) overtly challenging white supremacy. The data is further contextualized within the

current student protest movement. Chapter four and five underscore how students negotiate their racial identities, deal with racism, and resist white supremacy.

The sixth chapter contextualizes the study's findings by addressing student protest movements throughout the country and addressing the racial climate on U.S. college and university campuses. The second set of data includes a content analyzes of 78 student of color demands from colleges and universities across North America. Those findings cover: (1) new hires and retention: faculty and staff of color, (2) racial awareness curriculum, (3) campus life: space and place, and (4) solutions and training: programs and cultural awareness. These findings combined with the qualitative experiences of Latinx are situated in a larger discussion about racism on and off campus. The sixth and final core chapter underscores the political and racial awareness exhibited by students of color across the U.S.

Lastly, the conclusion chapter summarizes the dissertation findings, rearticulates solutions, and adds to the overall conversation of Latinx in higher education. The dissertation study findings show the challenges, strength, and solutions that student activists of color have brought to higher education and beyond. In addition, the chapters argue that this area of research demands further analysis to address the various means by which Latinxs experience college and use counter-framing to achieve a variety of goals. As Latinx college enrollment increases, investigating Latinx student transitional experiences, leisure activities, and responses to discrimination will lead to a better understanding of the overall Latinx college experience particularly in the confines of PWIs.

CHAPTER II

THEORY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This project aims to investigate the sociological aspects of Latinx, particularly the relationship between the individual(s) and social structure to better understand group dynamics. This study also helps college and university administers, education professionals, policy makers, and academics understand how Latinxs are received at predominantly white universities in order to develop and implement effective educational programs to reduce or minimize potential marginalization. This project increases empirical knowledge by expanding research associated with how structural factors impact the educational outcomes of Latinxs. The follwing review of race and education literature will provide a theoretical framework to understand the racialized experiences of Latinxs in higher education. Overall, social science literature requires expansion on the social conditions of Latinxs to reflect and capture population increases and challenge prevailing ideology. This dissertation provides concentrated research and inquiry into these conditions by analyzing student narratives, testimonies, and calls for protest.

Literature Review

My research questions address five areas of scholarship: (1) Structural Racism and Latinxs, (2) White Space in Education, (3) Critical Race Theory, LatCrit, and Critical Race Studies in Education, and (4) Counterspace: Challenges and Relief to White Supremacy. Each literature review section underscores the experiences,

narratives, and voices of people of color. The vast majority of the literature covered below examines the Latinx condition in the U.S. Therefore, the social science scholarship reviewed in this study captures and adds to a wider discussion of Latinx students as it pertains to education and race.

Structural Racism and Latinxs

The social structure has a significant role in defining political, economic, and social opportunities for marginalized racial minorities. The racial hierarchy adversely affects those races deemed subordinate, while the dominant racial group in the U.S. partake in the advantages afforded to them based on their dominant position (Feagin, 2010; 2006; Bonilla-Silva, 1999; 1996). Structural racism, along with the racial hierarchy, hinders the lives of people of color. Racism operates in a myriad of ways over time, which contributes to deleterious effects for people of color and influences their daily lives. Race, as a social construct, informs our understanding of how intergroup power dynamics influence behavior in society. Understanding how historical factors, such as government policies and laws (Haney Lopez, 2006), impact structural, systemic, and institutional racism can help reveal underlying employment disparities of Latinxs. The racialized social system is systemic in nature and shaped by historical events and has numerous outcomes across time, place, and context at both the institutional and personal level (Feagin 2006).

The racialized framing of Latinxs is a continuous process that affects the lived outcomes of Latinxs. The effects of racial oppression and stratification have a profound impact on the formation of the U.S. racial hierarchy, inherently altering the life courses

of Latinx (Dowling, 2014; Feagin 2014; 2008a; 2008b; 2002; González, 2011; Menchaca, 2001; Delagado and Stefancic, 1998). Research on how racism and racialization influences Latinx's academic performance, long-term job prospects, housing, and health outcomes, requires additional attention. The process of racialization in higher education has been under-researched particularly among Latinxs. Theories examining race, racialization, and racism provide insights to the interworking of white supremacy and offer ways to challenge white racial oppression.

Cobas, Duany, and Feagin (2009) contend that, "the racialization of Latinos refers to their definition as a 'racial' group and the denigration of their alleged physical and cultural characteristics, such as phenotype, language, or number of children" (1). For example, the ethnic label of Mexican has become synonymous with immigrant, outsider, and foreigner (Feagin and Cobas, 2014 Chavez, 2013; Feagin, 2002). As Mexicans enter the racialized social system, they are ascribed certain social locations and employment, which dramatically stigmatizes their ethnic identities and in turn their ability to resist and become integrated into the U.S. (Viruell-Fuentes, 2011). The process of racialization not only reframes Latinxs as threats but also substantially alters their life chances (Chavez, 2013; Feagin, 2014; 2012). Regardless if the individual chooses to identify as Latina/o/x or not, they are forced to deal with the negative framing associated with their group based on racial markers such as the Spanish language (Davis and Moore, 2014; Feagin, 2013; Hill, 2008). In the U.S. racial hierarchy, people of color are placed at the bottom, regulating resource allocation and life opportunities (Feagin, 2013; Hill, 2008). The white racial framing of Latinxs requires additional research to uncover and disrupt the

deep rooted racist structure (Feagin 2013; 2008a). In addition, systemic racism has crafted anti-Latinx practices that subjugate and marginalize Latinxs while simultaneously providing whites with both material and non-material gains (Feagin 2014; 2006).

Racial oppression remains foundational to the U.S. social system and continues to influence contemporary racist practices (Feagin, 2013). *Systemic racism* is evident in all our institutions and operates through the *white racial frame* (Feagin, 2013; 2009). Feagin (2013) describes the white racial frame as a white worldview that rationalizes and legitimates racial oppression. The white racial frame includes racial stereotypes, prejudices, ideologies, narratives, images, emotions, language accents, and acts of discrimination (Feagin, 2013). At the center of the white racial frame is a pro-white or pro-virtue framing that prioritizes white values and praises whiteness including intellect, culture, and standards of beauty. This framing stems from the harsh realities between white and Black relations and other people of color. Over several centuries Black Americans have endured violence, slavery, murder, rape, and many other atrocities. Today racism operates at a much more covert level but continues to have devastating effects on the Black community and other people of color. The white racial frame offers an analytic tool to deconstruct white racist ideologies and provide counter-frames to white supremacy.

The white racial frame is made up of several sub-frames that target specific racial and ethnic groups. The anti-Latina/o/x sub-frame stems from the white racial frame and works in the same manner but demonizes characteristics believed to be exclusive to

Latinxs. As a result, the anti-Latina/o/x sub-frame benefits white elites and by extension whites who harbor the same ideological constructs and framing. The white frame, the anti-Latina/o/x sub-frame, systemic racism, and scholarship deconstructing structural and institutional racism provide a framework to investigate the racialized experiences of Latinxs. This project hopes to echo race scholars and contribute to the notion that people of color, including Latinxs, must organize with like-minded people from all ethnic backgrounds to eliminate inequalities, oppression, violence, and exploitation in all manners and forms.

White Space in Education

The concept of *white space* derives from the historical formation of contemporary racial oppression. Within the educational system, white space sustains whiteness through the reification of white images and tangible social positions in the form of portraits, statues, artwork, university employees (i.e. people of color are disproportionately represented in staff positions in comparison to faculty positions), awards, and policing language (Moore 2008; Slattery, 2006; Hill, 1998; Feagin, Vera, and Imani, 1996). Universities are prime sites of white racism that students of color continually encounter on a daily basis, therefore becoming sites that reproduce racial inequality regarding individual characteristics across different ethnic groups (Moore 2008). Spatial segregation is an essential element of institutional racism, and this concept is reproduced and entrenched within our institutions (Moore 2008; Feagin, Vera, and Imani, 1996). Institutions are, "fundamentally racialized" (Moore 2008:25) therefore institutions like "U.S. colleges and universities are frequently permeated with much

subtle, cover, and blatant racism" (Feagin, Vera, and Imani, 1996: x). "Racialized space is one mechanism of institutional racism through which white power and privilege are reproduced in often tacit and relatively invisible ways" (Moore 2008:25). White elites have used this space to maintain, "power in part by controlling processes of knowledge dissemination through public schooling" (Feagin 2010:66). Racialized space in education is a manifestation of white supremacy and operates as sites of exclusion, control, and power. Students of color are expected to earn a college degree while attending largely hostile white institutional spaces in higher education.

In order to contextualize and analyze white space, I am utilizing the theoretical concepts of the white racial frame (Feagin 2010), white space (Moore 2008), and color-blind racism (Bonilla-Silva 2010; Carr 1997). These theories add further credence and analytical strength to literature focused on critical race studies in education. The white racial frame in particular will help analyze white space in higher education and historical and contemporary underpinnings used to reproduce whiteness on college and university campuses. The white racial frame as outlined by Feagin (2010) refers to a worldview appropriated by whites and non-whites to rationalize and justify racial oppression and the societal inequalities that have permeated American society since the early 17th century. The white racial frame goes beyond individual behavior such as bigotry, prejudice, and stereotyping to include narratives, images, emotions, and acts of discrimination that not only change over time but reinvent themselves to preserve white supremacy (Feagin 2010: 10-11). There is an emotional element connected to the white

racial frame. Rather than being passive and rational, whites often react emotionally, e.g. anger and fear.

Historically the white racial frame was present in the early beginnings of the U.S., originating in white racist social practices, "The structure of racial domination initially developed for enslaving African Americans and killing off or driving away Native Americans was later extended by descendants of the U.S. founders for the oppression of other non-European groups" (Feagin, 2010:223). Feagin also recognizes the power difference that exists between people of color and whites, "Not only have whites dominated the economic, political, legal, and educational values of this society, they have also been in firm control of the key roles and top positions in all the powerful institutions for centuries" (Feagin 2010:197). The racial hierarchical system that now exists in the subjugation and marginalization of people of color stems from this white cultural history of greed and violence, all in a deliberate effort to preserve white privilege and maintain white supremacy. The white racial frame together with the concepts of white space and color-blind racism offer the practitioner a greater understanding of the racial hierarchy including: how white space operates, the beneficiaries of white space, and how whites maintain white space.

Critical Race Theory, LatCrit, and Critical Race Studies in Education

Stemming from Critical Legal Studies from the 1970s, Critical Race Studies emerged as a direct response to the judicial and legislative repeal of civil right advances and to challenge white liberal constructs of knowledge, law, and scholarship. *Critical Race Theory* (CRT) directly confronts racism and can be used as methodological

practice to combat and eventually eliminate all forms of oppression. Critical Race Theory provides a theoretical framework that reinforces race as a social construction and emphasizes the need to challenge systemic racist practices embedded in white institutional structures (Delagado and Stefancic, 2012). Calmore (1995) reiterates CRT's important role in examining prevailing ideologies, epistemologies, and systems of power, "Critical Race Theory challenges the universality of white experience and judgment as the authoritative standard that binds people of color and normatively measures, directs, controls, and regulates the terms of proper thought, expression, presentment, and behavior" (318). CRT contests the prevailing discourse that subordinates and marginalizes people of color, particularly across U.S. society, in order to develop practical solutions to racial, gender, and class suppression.

Latino Critical Race Theory or *LatCrit* builds on CRT's framework, principals, and concepts, and was created to add nuances to the Black-white binary while further highlighting the Latina/o/x experience through law, politics, and society. The definition of CRT and LatCrit have both changed overtime but LatCrit can be defined as follows:

> LatCrit is a group of progressive law professors engaged in theorizing about the ways in which the Law and its structures, processes and discourses affect people of color, especially the Latina/o communities. LatCrits acknowledge that the Law operates in contradictory ways with its potential to oppress and marginalize co-existing with its potential to emancipate and empower. LatCrit is conceived as an anti-subordination and antiessentialist project that attempts to link theory with praxis, scholarship with teaching, the academy with the community. LatCrit theory is trans-disciplinary and draws on many other schools of progressive scholarship, such as critical race theory, multiculturalism, ethnic studies, Queer theory, feminism, cultural studies, postcolonialism, post-modernism, and environmentalism (LatCrit Primer, Volume II. 2001).

Scholars engaged with critically analyzing systems of oppression have galvanized behind LatCrit, and some have applied it to the institution of education (Bernal Delgado, 2002; Fernández, 2002; Solórzano and Yosso, 2002; Solórzano and Delgado Bernal, 2001; Solórzano and Yosso, 2001). Researchers, scholars, and activists have utilized LatCrit as a theory, method, and strategy to engage in educational issues and inequalities prevalent to Latinx. For example, "higher education has embraced the meritocratic illusion that it has been, is, and will remain objective and color-blind, but we believe that its assertions of neutrality serve to maintain existing race, class, sexual, and gender privileges while clearly devaluing and marginalizing Latina/o college students" (Solórzano, Villalpando, and Oseguera, 2005:289). Critical race scholars in education advocate for additional research to better understand the racialized conditions that Latina/o students face while attending white campuses (Yosso et. al. 2009). Latina/o student's perspectives are often left excluded from research and policy papers; subsequently their voice, viewpoints, and responses to educational conditions are left unacknowledged (Fernández, 2002). A critical examination of Latinx student educational experiences, transitions, and activities will help uncover and address the extent of racism on college campuses.

CRT in education provides a counter frame to the dominant ideology concerning race as it relates to education by examining how educational practices are used to subordinate and ostracize students of color. CRT in education deconstructs systemic racism and the prevailing mainstream narratives, emphasizing counter narratives that explain the experiences of people of color (Matsuda et al. 1993; Fernández 2002; Bernal

2002; Solorzano et al. 2005). According to Yosso et. al. (2009) the five tenets of CRT in education include: (1) intercentricity of race and racism, (2) contesting dominant ideology, (3) commitment to social justice, (4) centrality of experiential knowledge, and (5) interdisciplinary perspective. These five tenets provide a methodology to understand institutional racism at the university and college level. The framework of CRT and LatCrit works in combination with the white racial frame, white space, and *color-blind* racism to expose inherently racist practices embedded in educational institutions throughout the U.S. Critical Race Theory in education combined with LatCrit Studies in Education enhance this study's analysis by centering the voices of students of color.

Counterspace: Challenges and Relief to White Supremacy

I argue, in line with critical race scholars (Williams, 1991; Delgado, 1995; Crenshaw, 1995; Bell, 1995), that the exclusion of minority scholarship from academic literature has left this issue of *counterspaces* understudied and call for a more critical view of race related issues from the perspectives of people of color. Historically white university settings have traditionally been and continue to be institutions academically and socially conducive towards white students. The cultural, social, and academic needs of students of color largely go unnoticed or neglected. Critical analysis of Latinx educational circumstances will help to uncover the racism that has permeated and increased on college campuses.

Furthermore, elements of systemic racism (Feagin, 2006) specifically the white racial frame (Feagin, 2010), are employed by whites to explain and rationalize societal systems of structural racism. Systemic racism and the white racial frame are theoretical

tools that allow further scrutiny into how racism operates in educational settings. Also, a "we are not prejudiced" color-blind frame (Bonilla-Silva, 2010) allows whites to ignore Latinx agency and impede their ability to look past misconceptions attached to Latina/o/x such as the racialized stereotypes of lazy, unintelligent, and foreign. In reality, Latinx students actively traverse white spaces and create counterspaces to confront color-blind rhetoric and institutional racism (Yosso et al., 2009). Students of Latinx background build cultural and social counterspaces by applying the skills and experiences they gain from their educational and life journeys. Latinx counterspaces are efforts by students to strategize and directly challenge white hegemony in order to survive and succeed academically (Yosso et al., 2009).

Flores and Garcia (2009) also express the need for Latinx to have counterspaces "being able to have a space where the voices, stories, and testimonies of Latina women are acknowledged at PWIs (Mention once up front then delete here: Predominately White Institutions) is vital for their survival in higher education" (155). I argue that counterspaces represent the purposeful and intentional challenge of white oppression that is fundamental to institutions such as SU. These students practice a combination of safespaces (Hill Collins, 2002) and counter-framing (Feagin, 2010) to directly challenge spaces deprived of understanding their day to day experiences with racism and marginalization (Feagin, Vera, and Imani, 1996). Further supported by the concepts of the white racial frame, white space, and color-blind racism this dissertation project offers a critical view into the formation of race and racism and provides a platform to investigate the racialization of Latinxs.

Conclusion

Critical and structural race theories provide the framework to better understand why racism and educational disparities exist for Latinxs. Using LatCrit, systemic racism, and the white racial frame as theoretical frameworks enhances our understanding of Latinx student experiences while attending white institutional spaces. LatCrit and structural theories of race provide a platform that exposes the ways Latinxs challenge dominant academic discourses that demean students of color. Through a critical race lens, Latinx students can be seen as instrumental in educational advancement by allowing their voices to be heard and valued. Presenting counter-stories and narratives reveals marginalized and subordinated perspectives that can be utilized to dismiss claims of a post-racial society. Critical race theories highlight how white institutional spaces like SU weave racism into the structure of the university and how these policies and practices hinder Latinx student success. As colleges promote meritocracy and remain color-blind, they preserve white supremacy while simultaneously silencing students of color.

This dissertation explores the interactions of Latinx undergraduates at a single predominantly white university in the U.S. southwest in order to investigate their daily experiences as students of color. Their narratives are contextualized within the larger student protest movement. An analysis of the demands of student activists of color was conducted to show the commonplace realities of racism on campuses throughout the U.S. The findings of this study are position in social science literature that centers on race, ethnicity, and education. Other areas include Chican@-Latin@ studies and culture.

This dissertation builds on the existing literature by investigating the research questions described in detail below. The research questions offer insight into the Latinx experience in the U.S. and covers issues pertaining to higher education, community, racialization, family, assimilation, and discrimination.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND DATA

Introduction

There are two different sets of data analyzed in this dissertation study: (1) qualitative interviews and (2) written documents. The first set of data conducted was sixty semi-structured interviews with Latina/o/x undergraduate students concerning their academic experiences, transition from their home-culture, and the numerous activities in which they engaged in while attending Southern University (SU). The interviews were collected at a predominantly white large-sized flagship university in the South. Interviews are essential to understanding the collegiate experience. Face-to-face interaction provide researchers the opportunity to ask questions regarding their personal experiences, e.g. advice they may have to offer and their sensory experiences on campus. Interviews are vital instruments to assessing racialization and can provide a counter-frame to mainstream discourse (Williams, 1991).

Furthermore, race remains paramount to the interview process and impacts the questions, answers, and interactions between interviewer and interviewee (Dunbar, Rodriguez, and Parker, 2003). In other words, people of color have unique subjectivity, and their experiences require special attention to the historical and social significance of race pertaining to an individual's identity and self-presentation (Dunbar, Rodriguez, and Parker, 2003). Students of color recognize their racially complex identities and understand what Dunbar, Rodriguez, and Parker (2003) term as a "racialized subject." In this study Latinx students were aware that they are held to a white standard ranging from

behaviors, values, looks, and achievement. I found in this study that some students of color are reluctant to critically examine their racial identity or investigate whiteness due to institutional pressure to conform. According to Dunbar, Rodriguez, and Parker (2003) the interviewer must remain reflexive and recognize the humanity of SOC:

> Students of color face a constant struggle as they routinely must work to overcome obstacles – in the classroom, with other students, with professors, administrators, law enforcement officers, and judges (Dunbar, Rodriguez, and Parker, 2003: 147).

The interviews were conducted with an awareness of the cultural, historical, and social impact race has on the everyday experiences of students of color. The interviews were relevant to the participants and recognized their racial subjectivity. Moreover, aware of my role as a researcher of color, I was able to connect with the respondents based on my prior cultural knowledge about what it is like being a Latinx in the U.S. However, I did not overgeneralize my experience, I tried to be sensitive to the challenges Latinx students face at a PWI. This often resulted in conversations and dialogue during and after the interview, i.e. students would ask my opinion or thoughts about certain topics related to their educational experiences. This rapport was invaluable to understanding the complexities of the student narratives.

Critical race studies in education literature stress the importance of using counter storytelling and narratives in order to challenge white privilege and the prevailing stories that reinforce and reproduce racist ideology (Delgado, 1995; Calmore, 1995; Rodriguez, 2010; Solórzano and Yosso, 2001). Although the beliefs, perspectives, and experiences of Latinxs are often ignored, their stories and narratives need to be acknowledged to counter the dominant Eurocentric epistemology (Feagin and Cobas, 2014; Bernal, 2002).

The interviewing process provides Latinx students with a platform to express themselves, share their experiences, and voice their concerns. As a group, the student's demographic information were very similar and represent a significant portion of the Latinx undergraduate experience.

The vast majority of the students were first generation college students, bi-lingual Spanish/English speakers. Three were undocumented. Since initiating the study, two students have left the university. The participants primarily self-identified as either Mexican, Mexican-American, Hispanic, Latina, Latino, Salvadorian, and/or nation-state affiliation. Pseudonyms were assigned to each participant to protect their identity and provide anonymity. Appendix A provides additional demographic details about the students, major, class rank, and racial/ethnic identification.

The interview questions (see: Appendix B) focused on their educational experiences and ranged from their home-culture, transition to college, activities, and on/off campus experiences. When speaking with students, I asked general questions about their educational trajectory prior to college. The majority of the students interviewed were outstanding high school students with stellar academic marks such as participating in student organizations, honors coursework, college credit, excellent G.P.A's, and many students graduated near the top of their class. Students were also asked what type of leisure activities they participated in during their free time. For the purposes of this study leisure activities were defined as any activity except those related to work, class, or studying. Students self-reported how many hours per week were

dedicated to extracurricular activities. This number ranged from 5-30 hours per week. Other relevant questions related to their desire to attend SU.

When asked why they chose SU over another university, common answers indicated that their decision was based on the standing of their particular major, friendly environment, prestige of the university, and most important, financial aid support, i.e. scholarships. According to SU's self-reported undergraduate student enrollment for spring 2014 the demographics are as follows: 20% Latina/o/x, 67% white, 3% Black, and 5% Asian. These statistics are of particular interest because the Latinx student population at SU would qualify as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) at the 25% threshold. Therefore, as an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), SU is in unique juxtaposition given the ongoing changing demographics and overwhelming white cultural norms and anti-Latina/o/x sentiment present in and around campus. Furthermore, in-depth interviews are able to reveal interactions and uncover insights that statistics and demographics often do not contextualize. The narratives of Latinx students can work with statistics to add the nuances and everyday experiences hidden from plain sight.

The second set of data relies on student activists of color and their lists of demands. Students throughout the U.S. demanded their colleges and universities address covert and overt forms of racism on their campuses. This online archive, found at www.thedemands.org, was compiled by WeTheProtesters, which according to their website are a group of "protestors from across the country." The online format of the demands made the data easily accessible and up-to-date. There are nearly eighty total

demands and each list varies slightly depending on the university/college of origin. Another bonus was that transcription was unnecessary since the sample was written in document form. Re-reading and reviewing the data sample allowed for coding accuracy and reliable analysis. The online archived provided a synthesized and readily available version of the data.

The demands were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The process of content analysis offers a method to collect, interpret, and analyze the student data. Krippendorff (2004) defines content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (18). This methodology contextualizes the voices of the students through readily available text and relevant responses to current racial unrest. Therefore, in this study content analysis best accounts for the complexities, relationships, and description of individual and group nuances. The student demands combined with student interviews provide unique insights into the educational experiences of Latinx undergraduates.

Procedures and Data Collection

This section provides an overview of the procedures initiated to collect the data presented in this project. First, the interview participants were identified and recruited through classroom recruitment presentations, student organizations, direct on-campus contact, and word of mouth. Undergraduate students were eligible to participate in the study if they self-identified as Latina/o or Hispanic. Participants were not compensated for their involvement in this study. There were sixty student respondents (twenty female and forty male participants). The second source of data was extracted from "the

demands" website, which includes written documents created by students of color (SOC) demanding "an end to systemic and structural racism on campus" (www.thedemands.org). There are seventy-eight unique colleges and universities with a list of demands pertinent to their institution (see: Appendix C for a list of the student organizations and schools). The student demands represent the national conversation on racism and higher education. The interviews collected in this project are situated within the larger discussion of racial discrimination on college and university campuses in the U.S.

The data sample from the interviews was extracted from Southern University (SU) and was collected from fall 2010 to spring 2016. The data sample for this dissertation was drawn using a snowball technique. I conducted one-to-one in-depth and semi-structured interviews with Latinx students focused on their academic journey, and they were asked to talk about their numerous experiences, transitions, and activities they engaged in while attending SU. The interview sessions lasted on average one hour and were tape-recorded to provide a mechanism for transcription and playback accuracy. Student interviews were meticulously transcribed and coded for analysis purposes. This project has received IRB approval from Texas A&M University.

The size and location of the SU present distinct contexts on the educational lives of Latinxs. The interviews for this research were conducted in a state with a high centration of Latinxs, however, SU's Latinx student population do not match state demographics. This makes for an interesting site because the Latinx students at SU are ranked among the best in the state. Their achievements, expectations, as well as

mainstream discourses regarding college and the university's image are contrasted against the racist experiences many SU Latinx students go through once they attend SU as full time students.

The interviews provided a nuanced understanding of higher education and the Latina/o/x experience. The focus on the institution of higher education helps capture the mainstream white ideologies and hegemonic forces that saturate and permeate society. This study also uncovers how Latinx students deal with white racism; in other words, how stereotypes, biases, prejudice, and discrimination impact Latinx students and how they counter this hostility while attending college. Their narratives and counter-stories offer insight into how Latinxs endure, contend, and resist institutionalized forms of oppression both on the micro and macro level. Individual interviews offer flexibility such as tailoring questions, organically altering questions, and being open to other pathways and discussions. The advantages of in-depth interviews, supplemented by a semi-structured framework, involve face-to-face interactions, which can lead to direct responses to social cues and conversations leading to rich detailed information. The disadvantages of interviews can be time consuming, expensive, research bias, and a large amount of data.

The other source of data, the demand documents were gathered from thedemands.org, which is a website founded by Black activists who have maintained an online archive of student demands from throughout the country. The demands originally come from liberal art colleges, 4-year colleges, and universities. Student organizations either submitted their list of demands to the group or the demands were added

organically as they appeared on social media. Twitter was the primary facilitator in creating a database of student demands during the student protest movement. The demands were collected from 2015-2016. Most of the documents (roughly 90%)[2] were created in 2015 (primarily the fall). According to Samuel Sinyangwe the criteria for posting on the thedemands.org website was "that they were a group of students with demands focused on racial/social equity on campus in the wake of the protests at Mizzou/Occupy SLU" (personal communication with Samuel Sinyangwe). There were a total of seventy-eight colleges and universities represented on the website and all the "demands" were analyzed for this dissertation.

The demands were generated from on-campus student organizations comprised mostly of Black and African student organizations. However, there were many mixed-race groups that included students from various race and ethnic backgrounds. Some student organizations were exclusively made up of Black undergraduate and graduate students (primarily undergraduates), but their goals and vision were supported by other Latina/o/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, other students of color, and white students. Other organizations were exclusively Latinx with supporters from other racial backgrounds. The data and quotes incorporated into this study are representative of the categories and themes selected for this chapter. All but three of the schools were located in the U.S.; the three exceptions were the University of Toronto, the University of Guelph, and the

[2] Via personal communication with Samuel Sinyangwe, one of the planning team members for www.thedemands.org.

University of Ottawa. This data represents a representative collection of demands that positions this project into a national discussion on higher education.

Data Analysis

I used narrative thematic analysis to interpret the oral personal accounts of undergraduate Latinx students (Riessman, 2008; Chase, 2005; Richardson, 1990). The transcribed interview data was analyzed using the narrative thematic analysis approach. Thematic analysis is one particular form of narrative analysis which sociologists have used to analyze narrative texts (Franzosi, 1998). Narrative analysis in general, uses several narrative approaches, e.g. thematic, structural, dialogic, and visual analysis. Riessman (2003:334) provides an assessment of these interpretations of narrative analysis: ordering and sequence, temporally and spatially, thematically and episodically, and human agency and imagination. To better understand how people utilize narratives, Riessman (2003:334) quotes Bamberg and McCabe (Bamberg and McCabe 1998: iii):

> With narrative, people strive to configure space and time, deploy cohesive devices, reveal identity of actors and relatedness of actions across scenes. They create themes, plots and drama. In so doing, narrators make sense of themselves, social situations, and history.

Riessman (2008:183) adds to Bamberg and McCabe's (1998) definition, "narrative analysis (one component of the broader field of narrative inquiry) refers to a diverse set of methods, a "family" of interpretive approaches to spoken, written, and visual texts." In addition, narrative analysis recognizes the responsibility of the researcher to accurately analyze and interpret the interviewee's story, recognize their subjectivity, and stay true to their reality.

Narrative analysis can also be used to interpret data collected from interviews. I utilized this approach by allowing my participants full control of the interview and provided a space for them to possibly express themselves in length. Riessman (2003) discusses the importance of avoiding dehumanizing research practices by engaging the interviewee through a conversational and storytelling approach which "privileges positionality and subjectivity." Storytelling became a critical element in this study as participants often retraced their family's history as well as their personal educational accounts. For example, students talked about the role their parents played in helping them decide what college to attend. Narrative analysis includes storytelling and biographical accounts that capture lived realities across time and social location (Riessman, 2003). According to Riessman (2003: 333) narrative analysis has the capacity to link what C. Wright Mills described as the "intersection of biography, history, and society." The interviews are not entire life stories but rather educational stories that reveal their realities, actions, and social spaces. In essence narrative analysis tells the researcher much about the kind of society individuals and groups live in (Riessman, 2003).

Thematic analysis or narrative thematic analysis examines what was said, theorizes from each case as opposed to across cases, and most importantly focuses exclusively on content. In other words, thematic analysis can show how individual actions can produce significant results, e.g. counter-narratives generating the student movement. Furthermore, Riessman (2008: 53-54) stresses the utilization of thematic narrative analysis to highlight, "'what' is said, rather than 'how,' 'to whom,' or 'for what

purposes.'" A thematic approach makes finding common themes among a number of participants easier to develop theory, interpret what was said, and decipher meaning (Riessman, 2005). The data in the subsequent chapters are largely organized by theme and are illustrated with case studies and short quotes. Lastly, narrative thematic analysis, "attempts to keep the 'story' intact for interpretive purposes," preserving sequences rather than dividing the data into different segments (Riessman, 2008: 74).

An inductive analysis was employed to interpret the experiences of Latina/o/x undergraduate students in order to address the social, cultural, and institutional factors that influence and shape their experiences. The data was inductively grouped to create conceptual groupings (Riessman, 2005). The categories of home culture, leisure activities, and educational experiences were constructed before the extraction process. I then assigned single word descriptive codes to the entirety of the narrative interview data -- e.g. family, language, activities, classroom, community, identity, race, and racism.

Several patterns emerged from the student's educational narratives and were divided into five major categories: (1) family pressure (2) skills obtained (3) Spanish language (4) contradictions in involvement and (5) counter frames. The coded data was further analyzed into subcategories. For instance, the first theme of family pressure contained several subcategories including the older sibling role model, community hero, and first family member to attend college. The conceptual codes, categories, and subcategories generated from the collected data were divided into the following five themes: (1) family support as counter-frame, (2) skills obtained as counter-frame, (3) Spanish language as counter-frame, (4) placating whites as counter-framing, (5)

encountering everyday white racism at SU, and (5) overtly challenging white supremacy at SU.

Moreover, qualitative content analysis was used to analyze and condense the student demand data. Content analysis helped uncover and provide meaning to categories, themes, and patterns (Robson, 2011; Berg, 2001; Mayring, 2000). As a methodology, content analysis reduces large quantities of text to manageable interpretations of the data. Furthermore, accessibility and systematic coding make the data more reliable and replicable (Elo and Kyngas, 2008; Stemler, 2001). Content analysis provides an organized and methodological platform to read, review, and analyze the seventy-eight student demand documents. This process entailed open coding, category defining, and abstraction of data (Elo and Kyngas, 2008). This method added to the validity of the project, providing a theoretical technique that contextualizes the experiences of Latinx students while offering a framework to understanding the racialization of students of color in higher education.

The content analysis approach tests and verifies theory by uncovering patterns and social phenomena present in our everyday interactions and communications (Elo and Kyngas, 2008; Krippendorff, 2004; Berg 2001). Content analysis allows for openness and flexibility, ideal for examining the student demands. The demands were coded, categorized, placed into themes, and ultimately analyzed. Content analysis makes large bodies of data easily accessible and idyllic for written documents (Elo and Kyngas, 2008; Krippendorff, 2004; Berg 2001). However, working with large sets of document data can be time extensive and subjective. Yet, these limitations are not insurmountable

and can be overcome by properly implementing the process of content analysis and relying on a single archival source online such as www.thedemands.org. Qualitative content analysis helped answer the research question by providing a method to systematically interpret the data. Ultimately, inferences were derived from the student demands and presented in chapter four.

The coding process was done simultaneously while carefully reading each of the student demands. There were numerous codes used to organize the data: apology, resignation, faculty and staff, curriculum, health, space, reporting, admission, transparency, community, appointments, change, and other demands. After analyzing about one hundred pages of demands, the data fit into several categories focused on the grievances and demands of students of color throughout the U.S. such as, “campus life and culture,” “education and curriculum,” “interventions and accountability,” “financial aid,” “admissions,” and “student government.” Finally the following themes were the selected based on the amount of attention and dedication given to each demand: (1) retention of faculty and staff of color, (2) racially conscious curriculum, (3) campus life: space and place, and (4) solutions and training: the implementation of programs, workshops, policies, and committees. These themes are outlined below and articulate some of the political activism conducted by students of color along with some of their white allies. The student demands also provide excellent examples of how students of color exercise counter-framing when combating white racial oppression. Counter-framing is an important tool people of color utilize to overcome white racism and create alternative measures to fight against ongoing forms of racial exploitation.

Conclusion

This dissertation study uses two different sources of data to deconstruct the institution of higher education, capture student experiences, and record acts of resistance. The Latinx undergraduate interviews are contextualized by the student activists of color demands. The sixty in-depth semi-structured student interviews offer substantial findings regarding the transitionary, activities, and counter-framing of Latinxs. Paired with the demands of students from seventy-eight colleges and universities across North America and this study includes significant inquiries into higher education. Several data collection strategies, analysis, and methods were used to extract and interpret the data. Interviewing, snowball method, thematic narrative analysis, and content analysis helped measure, generate, observe, analyze, and make sense of the behavior, interactions, and experiences of Latinx and other SOC.

There are several limitations in the above described methodologies. Narrative analysis for instance, requires detail to subtlety and, "its methods are not appropriate for studies of large numbers of nameless, faceless subjects" (Riessman, 2003: 342). Each person's story are valued and narrative thematic analysis seeks to personalize or humanize the accounts rather than under or overgeneralize. Another drawback of thematic analysis concerns the amount of time dedicated to meticulously collecting and interpreting the data. Indeed the time spent collecting interviews, transcribing, and analyzing the data was slow and methodical. The process took place over the course of six years, providing a sufficient amount of time for data analysis. Moreover, the student list of demands is not a comprehensive list but rather one that was largely gathered at a

specific time (fall 2015). Therefore, many schools with similar student demands were left out of this dissertation. Yet, enough schools were included to provide a nationally representative sample size. Another short coming regarding the student demands, also concerned time constraints based on the large dataset. In this case the data was readily accessible via a website, therefore, applying content analysis was made possible by the reduction of transcription time. The methodological limitations for both datasets were not insurmountable and did not jeopardize the projects.

The methods utilized in this dissertation provide a space for students to voice their concerns, share their stories, and defiantly resist racial oppression. The methods described above articulate the lived experiences for POC, particularly Latinx students through interviews and the SOC protest movement through text. The narratives of people of color resist and challenge positivist inquiries and master narratives (Riessman, 2005). This is clear in the both textual analysis of the student interviews and their lived experiences at a PWI. Racial minorities are keenly aware of their subject position and incorporate a range of tactics and strategies to counter systemic racism, colorblind racism, and institutional racism. The following three chapters underscore the experiences of students of color and the ways they often resist white hegemony. The next chapter investigates how students transition from their home-culture to the university culture.

CHAPTER IV

TRANSITION FROM HOME TO CAMPUS CULTURE

Introduction

In this chapter, I explored and analyzed Latinx students' responses about their socio-cultural transitions and experiences from their home-lives and communities to a particular predominantly white university. Many of the Latinx students' lives and experiences revealed routine tension, disconnections, and disengagement. The findings also show that many students reported many problems and difficulties with routinely having to: (1) negotiate and renegotiate their home-lives and communities when interacting and relating to their dominant white university peers, and (2) having to negotiate and renegotiate their university lives and identities when at home with their families and friends. In the first set of responses, the findings indicate that many students typically felt their Latinx home-lives which consist of their families and friends from their neighborhood did not understand the socio-cultural transitions and education growth that were central to the difficulties with their social interaction and communication. Many students also expressed "hardship" and "stress" with managing their new emergent educational identities and experiences.

Complexities and Ambiguities with Social Support

Many Latinx undergraduate students relied on their families for immediate support but their families were also a source of contestation and conflict. The findings show that participants dealt with family in three distinct ways: (1) pressure, (2) support, and, (3) opposition. Leaving home to attend college can be difficult for both the student

and parents. Dante (self-identified Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in business) described the pressure he received from his mother during the process of choosing what college to attend:

> It was really hard for me to leave home… My mom really wanted me to stay… She was like… It made it really hard [she would say] Big State University is a good school. Go there [So she was putting a lot of pressure on you?] Yeah I mean it was just me and her at this point [So she didn't want her baby boy to go?] Yeah [haha] Haha, in her own words, yeah… [Did she come to visit you at school?] Yeah especially last year. If I didn't come home for the weekend she would come on Sunday [To check on you?] Yeah, she would bring real good food like tortas and everything but it was hard to… to decide, but the whole time I mean, I was indecisive, but at the end of the day I know I wanted to be here [at SU].

Breaking away from the family can be a gradual process that happens over the course of the child's college education. Dante talks about feeling the pressure to stay home for college but also explains how supportive his mother was after he chose to leave. Some Latinxs also talked about being unable to share and relate with their parents who did not attend college. Nearly all of the respondents in this project were first-generation college students. In comparison to their white counterparts who many have parents that attended SU or another university. Latinx students do not receive the same cultural and social capital as it pertains to college life. Julián (self-identified Mexican, 23-year-old, Senior majoring in social science) expressed the educational and cultural divide with his mother:

> When I go home and my mom tries to talk to me about this and that, I'm like, "Well no it is actually more like this." I try to explain it to her [right] and she says, "You should do things like this," and I respond, "It doesn't really work like that."

Julián also describes the difficulties he has relating to family back home regarding college and opinions that may contrast or cause arguments with others: “It’s much different. There is a lot of other things. I don’t really talk to anybody [family members] about school like issues related to my major, just because I don’t want to get into an argument. I don’t want to get into any problems outside of school.” Asked to talk more about life back home versus college, Julián conveyed a contrast between comfortability, trust, and pressure:

> The way I act at home with my family is completely different from the way I act here. I would be speaking Spanish at home. There is no English allowed in our house. [Can be yourself on campus?] Nah, not on campus, not even on my off-campus house here. I’m just aware of it. [Do you have trust here on campus?] Nah, one more year and I’m out [graduating from SU]. [Do you feel pressure?] Yeah, the pressure affects my school work, ’cause I have to do better, so I’m always on top of it. I’m always like “Shit, I should have read that, or shit I should have done this or I should have done that.”

Some Latinx undergraduates have approached college very methodically and business-like. The emotional shut off strategy has allowed these students to survive college.

Other students reported ample family support but recognized the challenges other Latinxs faced while attending a university. In another one of my conversational-style interviews with Lucas (self-identified Mexican American, Senior, majoring in social science), we discussed family support, pressure, and student push-out:

> [Have family or friends told you anything about leaving to college that made you feel bad?] My family has been pretty supportive of me since I made the decision to leave. I mean, sometimes my mom does try to get me to say stuff like, “I shouldn’t have left,” but that’s just cause she’s mad at me for… Well she loves me and wants me there. Besides that, it hasn’t been much, maybe just my friends saying, “man, why did I leave?’ I came in with 7 people from my high school and out of those 7, there’s 2 of us that are here for 3 years already. One came for a year, and left, and

> went back home. And then the others… So that's 3 people that are here. Then the other 4 have gone back home. They had a hard time, or… other random circumstances. Maybe they chose to work or something like that… Maybe, they had to work. I don't know, but they made the decision not to come back.
>
> [So, did you ever ask them why they left?] I tried to talking to them to see why they left, but sometimes, I just don't feel like being nosey and asking them. If they don't want to say it or answer my question, then I'm fine. It's fine. I mean… I think it was just other circumstances… It wasn't purely academic... Maybe, they're trying to start working already or they had other commitments with their families, so, I mean I respect them. They have their priorities and values, everything they consider, and I have mine. Everyone makes the decision that's best for them.

Latinx students are often pushed-out of college due to family obligations, financial instability, and systemic factors such as classism and racism. As Lucas highlights, any family support can be offset by additional commitments; adding institutionalized barriers i.e. lack of mentoring, microaggressions, and isolation. Sólorzano, Ceja, and Yosso (2000) define racial microaggressions as the manifestation of subtle racism (verbal, nonverbal, and/or visual) that whites often enact unconsciously. Other students talked about how their family viewed them differently once they started attending a university:

> I don't have a degree so they don't pay any attention to me. I mean, of course, I'm going to school, but until I finish… It's not real. They say, "Oh, he's just going to school. He hasn't accomplished anything yet." I learned a lot about physical health through yoga and I try to explain and it to them, I say, "Oh, you've got this problem?" Obviously, I'm not a doctor so I can't say this is right or wrong, but, "these are signs leading to this." I tell them, "You should maybe go do this and this." My family will be like, "Oh, yeah I'll do that or yeah, yeah, I know," but nothing ever happens. It's like until I get an M.D. they're not going to listen to me… They kind of brush me off (Christopher, self-identified Mexican, Senior majoring in humanities).

Christopher like Julián experienced push back from family members when expressing their viewpoints (attained from their college coursework) on subjects

pertaining to health and education. Although family can be a source of support there are also instances of contestation and misunderstanding. Dante, Julián, Lucas, and Christopher described the family dynamics concerning pressure, support, and opposition when leaving home and then returning home from college. Lucas, in particular, brings forth the important issue of Latinx retention and graduation rates. He described the small number of students that came from his home town to the university, specifically those who have returned home for reasons unknown. According to Lucas, his perceived rationale for his peers returning home is complex, which he lays out systematically via his thinking about: (1) the desire and/or need to work, (2) family ties and responsibilities, and (3) random circumstances. What is particularly troubling about Lucas is the way in which he and his high school peers who joined him at the university have withdrawn from the university. The withdrawal of Lucas' friends at SU is reflective of much of the social problems and issues that many PWI's of higher education have with recruiting and retaining racial and ethnic minorities in classes and on their campuses. According to Lucas' small group, more than 50% of his immediate high school peers who came to SU and left before graduation. These numbers are reflective of the large numbers of Latinx undergraduate university students who withdraw from PWI's of higher education.

The Integration of University Knowledge

The university often is a site of racial hostility, yet Latinx students are still able to learn critical thinking skills that they utilize to interpret the world around them. Many astutely pointed out the difficulties they faced when returning home and while attending

college. Several of the participants reflected pointedly on their racial and ethnic identities at their university and home communities. Manuel (self-identified Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in engineering) explained his unique positionality for not fitting in with either Latinx or white students:

> I just learn to accept it… I see Mexicans walking around here, you know. I look at them, and they look at me. We never speak. Say, back home, we would greet each other and shit, you know, but over here we don't. We don't speak to each other. We don't even try… We just ignore each other really. At first it really got to me, you know. It would be digging under my skin, but I just learn to accept it. It's sad though, it really is. I'm kind of numb to all the other shit, you know, people not wanting to speak to me. You mostly see white faces around here, and then you see one Black person, one Hispanic, and we don't speak to each other? It's like we just refuse to communicate! You'd think that [we would talk to each other] we're actually more alike… We have similar ways.
>
> [Do you think this affects your class work?] Yeah! Last year I know it did. I just didn't feel comfortable, but this year, I just, I made a vow to myself, "Manuel, you need to stay confident regardless of the circumstances… Regardless of what people say and how they look at you and shit like that." So, I feel like I'm more focused on what's important. Last year, I was more open to communication with my peers, but like now, you know, I'm not looking for that opportunity. I'm just trying to succeed in my classes that's it.

Julián (self-identified Mexican, Senior majoring in social science) echoed Manuel's sentiments by noticing class and ethnic differences among his Latinx peers:

> I don't know how to explain it. There's just differences like… [Yeah] You just see them, I see them [Mexicans] automatically [Okay]. And then when I see Mexican American's, I'm just like "No, that's not me either." [Right]. So I'm kind of in this place, where I'm just like, not fully them, just kind of like my own thing.

Manuel and Julián's experiences highlight the intersection of race and class and the challenges students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds or large urban centers deal with among their own racial group. This unique racial position impacts inter-group

relations and the ability for Latinx undergraduates to become part of academic culture. Students coming from hyper-segregated neighborhoods must learn to adopt and assimilate to white mainstream culture otherwise they will be labeled as an outsider by whites and other Latinx. The outsider experience also remains paramount to Latinx interactions with white students:

> [Do you feel like you can reach out to other white students?] I feel like you can't just walk up to anybody [Why?] Because they've been raised [pause] [As haters?] I guess so. I guess that's a way to put it, like they've been raised to look down on minorities (Felipe, self-identified Hispanic-Latino, Junior majoring in social science).

The participant points out the cultural deficit models that many whites possess when interacting and thinking about people of color. Felipe reasons that family values and practices are at fault for their racial biases. The white racial framing of students of color labels themes as undeserving affirmative action recipients and as intellectually inferior. Many students like Felipe were hesitant to call whites racist, reserving that distinction for overt racist behavior not individual or systemic discrimination. Felipe continued to discuss the racial dynamics at the university and his reasons for low Latinx enrollment:

> It is mainly a white school. Honestly if Southern University hadn't offered me a scholarship, I probably wouldn't be here, I mean it's a highly prestigious school, but you have to ask yourself, "Do you really want to go there?" They tell you on your high school visit, they're like, "Oh it's a friendly campus," but you don't realize that it's just a friendly campus to their own people [whites]. [Oh, I see] You know, if you mix with your Hispanic friends, then yeah it's going to be fun, but you're always going to be the odd ball out because you're out numbered [Yeah].

Similar to other accounts, once students live and attend the university full time they gain cultural and social capital as well as skills that help them critically engage with their environment. Many Latinx undergraduate students like Felipe quickly find out that

attending SU runs counter to the image the university sales: ethnic and racial diversity, multiculturalism, acceptance, and inclusion. The irony for many Latinx students is that they simultaneously experience cognitive dissonance and discrimination on-campus while learning how to cope with racial antagonism and academic struggles. For example, Christopher (a self-identified Mexican, Senior, humanities major) describes the issues regarding his family, friends, racial consciousness, and mental health:

> [Tell me how college exacerbated your anxiety and stress levels… with some of your friends?] With my friends, its always just like, well you know, like, just do it. You have to go out there. You have to tackle [just push through]. That's kind of what you do when you don't know what's going on. You just attack it, and attack it… like when I got to SU, I had a better understanding of what was going on in my head and… I could see the symptoms exacerbating. I don't know if I made them exacerbate by thinking about them or if they were actually just doing it. The pressures of school, maybe, the stress of school? Yeah, so I went back home for the winter break, and it was one of my friend's birthdays. At the time I was having trouble going outside… looking at the door was just terrifying. I would get ready… I would have all my stuff and I would go into the living and just sit down. I would just sit there. I would watch my friends leave and I wouldn't move for about 10 minutes. Another time, I was planning to go to Small Town to see my friends because it's what we do, Small Town is like 10 minutes away. So, I'm talking to my friend who picks me up, and he's says, "Oh yeah, it's Juan's birthday."
>
> [Were you anxious about going to an unplanned party?] I was just trying to get myself ready, putting up my mental shields and breathing and… Yeah, so I go in. This is where a lot of what I'm learning about culture and appropriation… and stuff starts affecting my relationships. Before I left, Michelle and I started to look into a Japanese practice called Reiki. So, they would have Reiki parties, which is like getting together and focusing on somebody for 10-20 minutes giving them as much energy as they need, and then we would switch off. Then we kind of come together… to a place to relax, which is all good and well. And then I came to school. All of my issues flared up, and so when I went back home, and before the birthday party, I had gone to a Reiki session. We were all kind of together, and Michelle was working on me, she was Reiking me, and she was telling me "Oh, I'm feeling that you had an issue with a teacher this semester?" I was like "No, not that I can think

> of." And she was said, "Oh, no female teacher?"… Then after we left [the party] I kind of realized I was growing more and more uncomfortable with this white women teaching me a Japanese practice who has no Japanese heritage… the modern day practice of Reiki was essentially stolen because it was a secret practice. So, the next day Michelle wanted me to go to another Reiki party, which I didn't feel comfortable with going to anymore because everyone at the party except me was white. I was avoiding it… I was explaining it to her that I was not able to go out and that was the first time I started to feel a disconnect with her… like her lack of understanding mental health issues about race.

The narratives above illuminate three significant issues the sociological literature and research has described and discussed in great detail: (1) the increased anxiety and stress with returning home to one's family and friends, (2) the integration of university knowledge about one's self, culture, and heritage, and (3) the difficulty of being made to feel marginal and neglected in a home community. In particular, Christopher describes how personal issues and anxieties are exacerbated by his learning of new knowledge and awareness about re-appropriated stolen Japanese cultural forms and practices. His new knowledge and awareness fosters difficulties with the management of racial identity and his interracial interactions with other whites in overwhelmingly white social settings. Christopher also describes feeling marginalized and neglected from members of his family, specifically after he provides them with information about how to deal with some of their problems and issues. These aspects of Christopher's socio-cultural discomfort are related to some of the other things he talked about with regards to what he has learned about U.S. cultural colonization and re-appropriation strategies. These socio-cultural aspects are also linked to both his awareness of what he is learning about mental health issues and about some of his families member's misunderstanding and

mis-education about the learning, critical self-reflection, and the engagement with the broader educational process.

Racism On-Campus

Racial and ethnic contestation in the form of microaggressions are part of the lived realities for many Latinx students attending American universities. Students in the sample expressed instances of invisibility, silencing, and being ignored particularly in their interactions with white students. For example, Manuel (self-identified Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in engineering) retold his everyday college experiences of marginalization:

> [Can you provide some examples of subtle racism that you had to deal with?] Yeah, like people ignoring me, you know, people making me say things twice. Like I say something and they say, 'What?' Like, I said they just ignore me… not making any eye contact.
>
> [Tell me about an incident outside of class?] Yeah, I have plenty. Okay, there was this one time I was at the recreation center. I was trying to learn how this machine worked, and I was trying to speak to this guy… He was this white boy, and I was trying to ask him how to work this thing. I said, 'Excuse me, sir?' And I said it twice. I was probably 5 feet away from him and this other guy approached him. The guy I was trying to speak to was looking down like he was reading something. This other guy came up to him and he started talking to him and then they walked away somewhere. He didn't give me a helping hand. He didn't want to give me the time of day like he was busy or something [Does that happen all the time?] Yeah.

Unfortunately this type of racial invisibility was common place for Manuel. White institutional spaces create an atmosphere where white students and faculty are not accountable for how they treat their fellow colleagues of color. Racialized spaces maintained by white students, staff, and faculty members exclude students of color and act as proxies for control and power. In some cases white students outright ignore

Latinx. Sitting in the same classrooms, working out in the same gym, and eating in the same dining halls do not constitute acceptance and inclusion. White cultural practices of dehumanization further marginalize students of color and impacts their self-esteem, academic performance, and mental health. At the same time Latinx students are ignored, their bodies are hyper-visualized and marked as unworthy of respect and decency:

> I still remember this one incident. I was trying to go inside an engineering building, and this white guy was walking in with this white girl and I guess I didn't have access to the building. It was locked at the time, but he was able to get in and I was trying to get in as well. I didn't know what to do, but I heard him say "No Mexicans allowed," or some shit like that and then him and the girl just laughed and walked away (Manuel self-identified Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in engineering).

Frequent situations of being blatantly ignored and excluded were common for several Latinx students. Fernando (self-identified Mexican, Senior majoring in business) points out similar interactions with white students; similar to Manuel whites often decided to ignore him after they made eye contact and were able to decipher his racial makeup:

> [Do you feel like white students make you feel invisible at times?] No it's more of, 'I see you, but I don't want to talk to you,' [okay] type of thing. [What do you mean exactly?] Like sometimes you make eye contact with people [yeah] and sometimes I'll smirk, you know, friendly smile, just looking and they'll turn the other way. [Oh, okay.] You know, and it's like 'Oh my bad' [my fault].

Although Fernando made an attempt to be friendly and put on a nice face to appease his white counterparts, once rejected, he blamed himself for not being well received. Internalizing white racial oppression (Hipolito-Delgado, 2010; Padilla, 2001) is a regular occurrence for Latinx students at PWIs. This practice has serious repercussions on academic performance and mental health as reiterated by many respondents in this study.

For instance, Mario's (self-identified Hispanic, Sophomore majoring in engineering) narrative is particularly poignant because he was valedictorian of his high school:

> When it came to an engineering project, the guy that was in front me… John [white male student]. When I gave my input and ideas, he basically said, 'Hey your ideas are no longer valid in this group.' He told me, 'You should get out.' I was in shock [yeah] because I was a team member, and he was telling me that I shouldn't be on the team anymore. Everyone was kind of in shock as well. You could see it in their faces… It actually affected me emotionally.

Instead of retaliating against his white antagonist, Mario was able to calm himself down despite his shock and embarrassment. Confronted with white privilege, Mario bravely asserts that John's words made him want to react violently and confront him, but ultimately he chose to avoid any additional conflict. However, the incident stayed with him for the rest of the semester:

> Three things I wanted to do, but my first intention, for some reason, I almost punched him. I almost did. I almost punched him but I kept… I tried to keep… I thought of God first and thought what would he do in this situation. [You went to a higher power?] I believe in humbleness like I said, so I was like, ignore it. Two: the other thing I would have done, you know, later on, just confront him, but I never did. And three: the third thing that I will always do is just let it go. I'm just like whatever. I just took it in. Like I said, I took it in. I believe in peace. I don't want to cause any more conflict. I just want to finish [yeah] this year and now, after he said that, I actually woke up angry [yeah] cause that actually… it basically shot down my dream of becoming an engineer. How dare he say that I don't belong here.

Rather than react in an equally hostile manner, Mario chose to calmly process the situation and find a place of peace, but that does not mean the incident was forgotten. Clearly the white student's biased remarks affected Mario. He spent a lot of time and emotional energy thinking about the situation. Students like Mario consistently employ a counter-frame to oppose white racist ideologies. Contending with racism are regular

occurrences for Latinx students, and challenging white racial framing becomes part of their college and life experiences.

Impact of Racist Incidents

Racial oppression impacts the lived realities of POC. Young students of color are particularly at risk because they do not have the same access to social resources as white students. Furthermore, traversing the college system is often stressful, pressure filled, and full of anxiety especially during test time. Dealing with racism and discrimination under these conditions can exacerbate existing health concerns including those that are mental, physical, and physiological. The lingering impacts of racial oppression demonstrated by Mario's narratives underscores the ways that racism negatively influence Latinx students. Coming to terms with the incident was a process Mario admits was extremely difficult, and without a sense of satisfaction, he continued to feel self-doubt, resentment, and marginalization.

> [Did it affect your work?] Yeah it actually did, for some reason it actually affected my work because I couldn't concentrate in my other classes, and I started doing poorly. After he said that, I just didn't know what to do. I grew rage, [yeah] and I didn't know how to release this stress of rage, so [yeah] I started to do weird things academically. I mean I still showed up for class, but I started… [You weren't being as productive?] I was the productive type. I didn't become the productive student I became or I was back in high school; focused, always doing my work on time. I was behind on work [yeah] ever since then. I never… I started losing focus quickly. It just really, it took me to, it really affected me a lot cause [yeah] (deep breathe).

Mario expressed the long-term negative effects of the incident and his unsuccessful attempts to seek help. First-generation students like Mario often do not have the required social and cultural tool-kit to deal with and overcome racism, "I didn't know how to

release this pain basically. [Yeah.] I didn't really know how to release it. [Yeah] (pause) I didn't know what to do." The racial environment on-campus often makes students of color feel they have no outlets for help, and they end up gritting and bearing their anger and pain. Overt forms of institutional violence have a lasting impact on Latinx students throughout the U.S.

Mario's story is vital to our understandings of race and racism on college and university campuses. I have selected Mario's narratives as a small case study to highlight the consistent racial backlash he has endured as a student. As stated earlier in this chapter, Mario was a valedictorian at his large urban high school and came across as an unassuming and polite individual. As one might imagine, Mario is an intelligent well-mannered young student undeserving of racial discrimination; yet, time and time again he was the object of white racism.

Psychological Impact

Many Latinx students internalize acts of discrimination and racism because they either do not have or they are unaware of the proper outlets available to them such as mental health professionals, ombudsmen, or reporting systems. SOC often avoid seeking help from institutional authorities because those offices can be sources of white bureaucratic rejection rather than penalizing those that commit racist acts of aggression. Students tend not to report incidences of racism if they have inclinations of powerlessness. For example, reporting might adversely impact their grade. Moreover, the emotional and mental burden endured by Mario took a substantial toll on his personal health and his academic performance. Stress, rage, lack of focus, and pain were

symptoms triggered by Mario's painful classroom incident. The psychological trauma was only compounded by the professor's previous behavior. I asked Mario if he had reported the incident to the professor and he explained that was not a viable option:

> When I went to his office hours, I knocked, and he was like, 'Come in.' And I was all like, 'Hello. Good afternoon Dr. Williams.' And he responded, 'Good afternoon.' And as soon as he turned around, his face, body impression went from a happy face and started decreasing. [Really?] His smile and attitude started decreasing. [When he saw you he started changing his attitude?] And I was like okay. In my mind, I thought he was having a stroke for some reason [That's how significant the change was?] I asked myself, 'Is he was having a stroke?'

Campus, department, and academic culture allow professors to routinely devalue teaching, student-teaching relationships, and mentoring. The pressure to publish and make tenure while teaching courses requires significant energy on the part of faculty members. Thus, when students of color seek help from their professors they often have limited time and grow impatient or in other words have less emotional and mental energy to spend on teaching SOC. Mario's retelling of events captured the professor's disappointment and change in demeanor:

> He started to frown a little bit [yeah] like he was getting frustrated I didn't start understanding a topic because when I explained to him the situation, a specific engineering concept I didn't understand, he explained to me, and I told him, 'Can you repeat that to me. I still don't understand what you mean.' And he started frowning, 'Look I'm trying to tell you.' And I thought, okay he's starting to get a little aggressive. [Okay] I felt he was a little bit aggressive, so that's the reason why I didn't feel the connection and I could have told the teacher what my teammates said, so I held it in until the end of the year.

Ironically SOC are expected to perform academically just like their white peers but are continuously doubted and challenged intellectually based on their racial affiliation. Psychologically, students of color are caught between silencing themselves

and resisting racial oppression. But as Mario's small case-study shows, Latinx students are often forced to internalize their own racial oppression causing internal conflicts like self-doubt and mental strain. Prior to encountering the white male student (John) in class, Mario had sought instructional help from the professor but was met with aggression and annoyance. Consequently, Mario did not feel comfortable or safe approaching the professor about the hostile white student and actually never spoke to the professor again. In fact, the sight of Mario triggered a reaction by the professor so intense that Mario believed the professor was suffering from a serious medical ailment. The white male professor's physical response to a Latinx student seeking instruction reveals the racist ideological constructs imposed on SOC and highlights how they are treated in the confines of white institutional spaces. Although undergraduate SOC may encounter racial hostility they are required and expected to fulfill their role as a student:

> I was still participating of course because it's part of my grade, and I always try to make good grades. [Yeah.] I needed to get at least a passing grade because I didn't want to retake this course, you know. [Uh huh] And basically the relationship with John and the other white people, obviously they're fantastic. Everybody gets along with him. They tell jokes, and then when I come in, it's all different. It's kind of like quite, crickets, if you could just imagine crickets… as soon as I sat down it was completely silent.

White institutional violence in the form of silence, aggression, and disparaging remarks are manifested in the daily campus experiences of many Latinx undergraduate students. As racialized students of color, Latinxs are often the antithesis to the pro-white or pro-virtue framing of whites (Feagin, 2013). As the above cases demonstrate whites usually react emotionally and at times consciously restrict Latinx educational attainment, whereas Latinx undergraduates respond to macroaggressions rationally and continue to

satisfy their duties as student and classmate. Latinx students at PWIs face any number of emotions such as feelings of rejection, aggression, pain, anger, and seclusion. Despite encountering subtle forms of racism (i.e. invisibility, ignoring, no eye contact, and rejection) Latinx are expected to be educationally engaged and high achieving. Essentially their identities shift as they begin to see themselves not just as students but Brown students. These narratives reinforce our assertion that Latinx students are not fully integrated into academic life or home life. The next section expands upon the home pressures of being a Latinx university student and the complexities of racial identity in the U.S.

Negotiating Identities with Friends

Social support, such as friends, play a fundamental role in the educational outcomes of college students. The findings show that for Latinx undergraduates, friends not only provide support but often determine one's identity, integration, and affiliation to home-culture and campus life. I argue that negotiating their respective identities puts Latinx students in a bind, not fully integrated into the campus community and neither embraced by their home-community. This section highlights how friendships operate as the litmus test of inclusion and exclusion. The participants balance their college and home-ethnic identities based on forging new friendships, maintaining old friendships, and losing old friendships. For example, Ignacio (self-identified Mexican American, Senior majoring in science) and Lucas (self-identified Mexican American, Senior majoring in social science) described the changing nature of friendships back home including the loss of friendship and meeting new friends:

> Ignacio: I mean I haven't really talked to anyone from my high school, except for maybe three close friends. I tried to connect with them once… when I do go back home [large urban city]. I try to hit'em up… and hang out. Everyone is spread out doing their thing. In middle school, I was really close with some friends. We were like family... Now, we fell out. I just have them on Facebook. I don't really talk to them. One time I went to see them, my freshmen year, and they were like… I could tell it was different. I'm from the rough part of town… it's the ghetto. They tell me, 'You're the one that made it out the hood… we look up to you."
>
> Lucas: I lost a lot of contacts graduating from high school and coming here. I lost a lot of contact with my friends, so, now when I go home it's kind of weird to try to reestablish the relationships we had before. It's kind of awkward. Since I'm here, I'm not aware of the social aspects that go on back home or anything that happens with them. I'm not aware of it. I just find out about it casually on Facebook or until I go home again… I might hear rumors or something.

Attending college becomes the new marker of identity for many Latinx students as their old friends begin to disengage by establishing social and class distance. Ignacio and Lucas began to sense an obvious disconnect among their old friends; education became the basis of their social distancing. Economic-social mobility as indicated by college advancement became a precursor for exclusion. For instance, Ignacio's friends made an effort to recognize his accomplishments because their perception of him as a close friend had significantly changed, "You're the one that made it out the hood… we look up to you." Identified as a college student and home-community outsider, Ignacio had "made it out" both physically and socially and his old friends began to treat him accordingly:

> I went back a few times. I would send them messages, like 'happy birthday' or something. Now, we don't really hang out anymore… They don't respond, but I guess I don't reach out enough. I'm always too busy, or they're too busy cause their pretty much adults. They got to work. They have kids. They're married. They jumped into life really fast, so everything changed. I don't really… it's hard to keep in touch (Ignacio self-identified Mexican American, Senior majoring in science).

Leaving the home-community to pursue a college degree indicates to some of those in the home-community a move towards whiteness. Some of Ignacio's old friends saw his emerging college student identity as aligning with white standards of being; ultimately these home-friends slowly disassociate themselves with those who attend college and do not display the same characteristics indicative of the home-community -- e.g. dress, speech, and mannerisms. For example, Ignacio (self-identified Mexican American, Senior majoring in science) was keenly aware of his new image and status among his old friends, "I felt different. I think they thought I was too good for them or something like that. But, it's not like that… it just felt weird." Navigating a new identify whether self-imposed or forced can be difficult and challenging:

> I have heard some of them [friends from home] say, 'Oh so you're going back to college,' and stuff like that. They don't say the name of the university, you know. It's always just 'college' especially with people in my household. Some of my other friends say 'college, college, college.' and I don't know if they say that because they think I'm better than them… Honestly I don't… I try to be the same as I use to be, but it's hard now that you have more knowledge. You have more experiences here and its different compared to how it was there [back home] to how it is here (Andrés, self-identified Hispanic, Senior majoring in engineering).

Ignacio and Andrés get the sense that their friends believe them to be "too good" or "better than them" due to the hostility and lack of reciprocal friendship. Yet, Latinx university students are anything but pompous and entitled. They are constantly reminded of their subordinate position and continue to deal with white supremacy even as they adapt to white normative ideals and behaviors. Although students realize that circumstances have changed, the process of losing friends can be emotionally draining:

> When I look back at it, it saddens me because there was a friend I use to be really close with since we were kids. We hardly even talk now… and I

> don't know, everybody is moving on like, my closes friend, like when I found out through his parents that he was getting married and that he was having a kid, I'm like, 'He didn't tell me,' and I'm like dude. [No text, nothing.] I was both mad and sad because we've been through so much you know, back in the [day]. I've known him all my life. I felt... not betrayed but... I just felt like he… he fucked up, you know. He should have at least told me or something (Andrés, self-identified Hispanic, Senior majoring in engineering).

Latinxs make personal sacrifices by attending college that may disrupt close bonds and relationships. Especially if these students are enrolled in colleges and universities outside of their home communities. Missing holidays, birthdays, and other special occasions, like weddings and baby showers, are some of the many sacrifices SOC forsake to purse a college degree. In terms of friendships from back home, these relationships were also susceptible to change. Dealing with loss of friendship is an area that is rarely talked about in relation to college but one that has real impacts for Latinx students. For instance, when asked about losing friends, Andrés expressed feelings of disloyalty, confusion, anger, and betrayal:

> Sometimes, when I'm back home… I do feel like, man, I shouldn't have left. But then, when I think about it a little more, it's like, that's the same way they would feel if they would come over here. Like, they wouldn't have anything. They would feel out of place here, so it's… to me it's the same thing. It's, I mean… maybe they weren't my real friends or something like that, you know (Lucas self-identified Mexican American male, Senior majoring in social science).

Losing close friends, especially ones you grew up with, can be emotionally and spiritually challenging. Andrés and Lucas expressed feelings of not only sadness but also anger, betrayal, and regret. Latinx students experience dissonance with their home-culture and respond by establishing new relationships with other Latinx students, "Even though I lost some friends, I made new bonds with new friends, and they're like my new

family" (Ignacio, self-identified Mexican American, Senior majoring in science). Still other students have a hard time making friends on-campus but continue to have strong relationships with their friends back home:

> I can act a certain way, they know me as a person [friends back home], but here [at SU] I feel like I have to tame the beast or just be more careful; the way I act, the way I interact with people. I feel like I will offend people (Julián, self-identified Mexican, Senior majoring in social science).

Aware of the racial atmosphere at SU, some Latinx students carefully navigate their social position by avoiding interactions and friendships with whites due to prior discrimination. Julián captures how the white racial frame produces notions of inferiority by juxtaposing his behavior to those of whites. He modifies his behavior to avoid unwanted attention to his racial makeup due to the racism permeating campus. The practice of avoidance at PWIs is often ineffective because whiteness is unavoidable: one must self-isolate to avoid potential contact with whites. Julián undertakes total avoidance of whiteness as a student at SU:

> I know I wouldn't fit in, so I watch what I say a lot, [okay] and I don't really mingle with people much. It's not really a big issue for me. I keep to myself pretty much… I know I can't act like them, [white students] and I can't act like myself. If I want to fit into a certain extent, I have to watch what I do and watch what I say, but I also can't act like them because I know I will get treated differently. I will get in trouble basically.

Latinx students like Julián describe isolation on-campus, recognition of white privilege, and internalize the notion of the racial other. He also polices his behavior and actions around white students. As a result, Julián has had a hard time mingling and making friends with his college peers including other Latinx students. In addition, total

avoidance can lead to a semblance of safety from white racism but also leaves SOC on the margins of academic life. Negotiating friendships, home and college institutions, and balancing identities, remain critical to the Latinx undergraduate experience.

The participants in this study were attending a university outside of their home community and were unable to visit home regularly. However, when some did return home their friendships had either changed dramatically or ceased to exist. It should be pointed out that there were many students that maintained previous friendships and had also formed new ones while attending college; others did not establish any new friends but had study partners or classmates they associated with regularly. The majority of the students experienced disruptions on two fronts between their home and college lives: (1) the home pressures of cultural conformity and ways of thinking about the world and (2) disruptions coming from the stresses of trying to achieve some social integration, normality, and support for their educational goals. In some cases Latinx students were prescribed a college identity by their home peers and some embraced their new identity. Their identities and previous friendships were greatly affected by their educational aspirations, decisions to attend college away from home, and their current social-economic mobility via higher education.

Conclusion

The student narratives in this chapter represent the complexities that studying at a PWI presents, particularly issues concerning integration, acceptance, and identity. As Chavez (2008:9) indicates, “Looking at who we ban from entry, or for whom we create obstacles to integration into society… also reveals how we imagine ourselves as a

nation—that is, as a group of people with intertwined destinies despite our differences." White institutions need to do a better job recruiting, retaining, and ultimately graduating Latinx students. Our futures depend on incorporating Latinxs into society and education remains central to this endeavor.

The perception remains that Latinxs cannot flourish even when given a positive learning environment; however, learning environments are normalized white spaces. Whites make up the majority of students, professors, and faculty. PWIs of higher education need to address Latinx transitional needs from the home-culture to the college/university-culture. White people's positions and perspectives are based on the privilege of cultural, racial, and ethnic environments that are similar to many of their home environments.

Difficulties about the growth and support that is necessary from college friends and acquaintance need to be further researched. Interactions between the same racial and ethnic groups is of great support for students; interracial and interethnic contact and interaction is also a necessary part of student growth and development inside and outside of the classroom. Universities and colleges are often thought of as liberal democratic spaces for young people to learn and grow, yet when we take into account the histories of marginalized groups in predominantly white U.S. institutions of higher education we must recognize the continued struggle for students of color. There are difficulties about being separated from a home environment, which has not been able to prepare students for interracial and interethnic interaction with whites. One possible explanation could be that Latinx families from these home communities do not have the cultural and social

capital or sustained interactions with whites outside of their communities to adequately prepare their children. This is an additional burden for Latinxs that whites, who are ethnically and culturally privileged, are unaware of and do not face at PWIs of higher education.

CHAPTER V

LATINA/O/X SURVIVING COLLEGE AND FINDING SPACE ON CAMPUS

Introduction

> *I remember sitting down in class and nobody would sit next to me. There would be two empty seats right next to me and I never knew why* (Juan José, self-identified Mexican, Senior majoring in humanities).

> *I don't think I would fit in there. They choose mostly white people like white girls. I haven't seen a Hispanic in a sorority. I've just seen white girls with their sorority shirts. I don't know, I guess I'm not their type of girl… like blonde, pretty, and tall* (Camila, self-identified Mexican American, Freshman majoring in social science).

This chapter examines patterns in the leisure activities of undergraduate Latina/o/x students at predominantly white universities. Despite their multicultural rhetoric PWIs continue to be sites of exclusion where students of color encounter racial hostility on a daily basis (Von Robertson et. al. 2014). The quotes above exemplify the racialized atmosphere maintained at Southern University (SU). SU is a very large (more than 50,000 students), historically white institution with generations of white students attending because of family legacies and the appeal of conservative academics and pedagogy. Many Latinx students at SU find themselves in an unwelcoming atmosphere that fundamentally rejects their unique perspectives and experiences. For many Latinx undergraduates the manifestations of racism often lead to a plethora of consequences and stresses, such as isolation, embarrassment, denigration, frustration, poor academic performance, dropping out, lack of networking, rejection of their home culture, depression, fatigue, internalizing self-hate, squandering time and money, and missing future job prospects (Arbona and Jimenez, 2014; Franklin et al., 2014; Robertson et al.,

2014; Villegas-Gold and Yoo, 2014; Ojeda et al. 2012; Solórzano et al. 2005). The average college student experiences everyday stresses that impact their health, this chapter explores systemic racism stressors and the ways Latinx students respond to racial oppression via on and off-campus activities.

Latinx students enter universities such as SU with hopes of attaining a college degree but often face academic and social challenges based on their ethnic and racial background. Despite on-campus hostility Latinx college enrollment has steadily increased; "a record seven-in-ten (69%) Hispanic high school graduates in the class of 2012 enrolled in college that fall, two percentage points higher than the rate (69%) among their white counterparts" (Pew Hispanic Center report, 2013:4). However, these promising statistics only reveal a partial understanding of Latinx college enrollment. The same report also reveals that Latinx students are "less likely than their white counterparts" to enroll in a four-year college, attend a selective college, enroll full time, and complete a bachelor's degree (Pew Hispanic Center, 2013:5). College enrollment does not portray the entire story. Solórzano et al. (2005) points out, "There actually appears to be a decline in their graduation rates given that these rates have not kept pace with their population increase" (286). Echoing Solórzano et al. (2005) Telles and Ortiz (2008) found that while first and second generation Mexican ancestry Latinx have greater educational achievement, the third and subsequent generations experience a significant drop in their access to education.

Furthermore, the lack of Latinx college graduates has a severe economic and social reverberation on the entire Latinx community and beyond including missed job

opportunities and the loss of potential mentors for future scholars and professionals (Solórzano et al. 2005). The individual educational inequities of Latinxs reflect the greater systemic failure of educational reform. I argue that the growth of Latinx college enrollment, low transfer rates to 4-year universities, and poor retention and graduation rates at 4-year colleges can be further understood within the context of student activities and the creation of Latinx student counterspaces. The chapter revolves around some pertinent questions regarding the Latinx university experience: what type of activities do Latinx undergraduate students participate in during their free time? How do certain activities help students navigate college life at predominantly white universities? And, how do the resulting Latinx counterspaces impact these students' educational experiences? This dissertation chapter addresses the lived experiences and leisure activities in order to understand the academic performances of the growing Latinx student community.

Latinx students engage in various extracurricular activities for a variety of reasons, and their activity choices are tied to their academic performance. Moreover, their academic success is affected by the racial climate of the university (Moore 2008; Solórzano et al. 2002). Revealing the lived realities of these students will help university officials implement policies and programs that more effectively achieve diversity on college campuses. Policy makers and university administrators need to establish services designed to sustain a commitment to improving Latinx student mentoring, financial support, admission, and completion percentages. The type of activities in which students participate during their free time not only speaks to their overall problematic social

location in white institutional spaces, but also helps them traverse their way through an often racially charged college experience. Taking a structural/systemic approach to understanding the processes of racialization faced by these upwardly mobile Latinxs, I uncover power dynamics based on institutional racism, white supremacy, white privilege, and ultimately the subjugation of Latinxs who have "made it."

Latinxs face daily onslaught of racism, despite making it to the white coded middleclass space of the competitive flagship state University. As we noted above in the comments, students of color are a threat to whites and to their dominance and control at PWIs (Chavez 2013). This means that Latinxs everyday interpretations of the space will be coded by these daily oppressions, comments, and violence. Examining how they "cope" with these systemic and everyday forms of racism is crucial to understanding how white supremacy is not mitigated by middleclass status, good grades, and having lighter skin than most Latinxs. Instead, we show that the nuances of space, location, agency, activities, and racialization significantly impact how Latinx undergraduate college students navigate predominantly white institutions.

Diversity Goals and the University Racial Climate

SU has responded to the lack of students of color and persistent racism by introducing diversity programs and policies that call for greater equality and acceptance. Below are a few of the goals stipulated in SU's Diversity Initiative:

> Promote a positive and supportive climate by identifying aspects in the climate of individual units and the University which foster and/or impede a working and learning environment that fully recognizes, values, and integrates diversity in the pursuit of academic excellence (SU Diversity Initiative, 2010, page 2).

> Integrate into the mission and goals for the University and units assurance that students, staff, and faculty (tenure and non-tenure track), regardless of identity, are all treated equitably (SU Diversity Initiative, 2010, page 2).

The implementation and effectiveness of these goals have made had a noticeable impact on the school's racial climate in terms of university demographics and racial atmosphere. Latinx enrollment has increased but not to the pace of the surrounding Latinx population. SU's internal assessment of their diversity plan has revealed the complexity of race relations and the difficulty in addressing such issues on campus.

In SU's 2008 campus climate report, students answered a variety of questions concerning "diversity." The following are a few responses from SU students surrounding their experiences, critiques, and attitudes towards the idea of academic diversity:

> I don't really see that much diversity here, even though they say "it's a very friendly space" I don't see that, cause when I walk into class all I see is white students and they don't make eye contact with me, they don't even say hi and when I did said hi they would just ignore me, on the bus too, after that I mean I stopped being that nice (Daniela, self-identified Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in humanities).

> Despite being popular, well-known, and well-rounded in high school and my home community, I felt isolated for being a minority my first year at SU (Hispanic, female, junior) (SU campus climate survey, 2008:141).

Many Latinx students expressed the difficulties of culture shock and the acclimation period they experienced in their first year at SU, experiences that many white students often do not understand or regularly ignore. The issue of diversity is further contextualized through several white male student's responses to issues of diversity:

> I think y'all are committed to diversity but shouldn't be. I think y'all should take a hands off approach to it. There is no need to go out of your way to make this campus "diverse." People should be admitted to this university and given scholarships solely on there [sic] abilities, not race,

> sexual orientation, etc. I get the feeling a large part of the student body is sick of hearing y'all preach about "diversity" (white, male, freshman) (SU campus climate survey, 2008:144-145).

This particular white male argued that the university was focusing too much on diversity. He believes that there has been too much "preaching" regarding the implementation of diversity initiatives and programing at SU. Additionally, he implies that students who contribute to the diversity of SU did not gain access to the institution and scholarships through their merit but instead were given access in an unfair manner. He concludes with a statement about his sense that the "large part" of the student body is not interested in actively maintaining or aiding the diversification of SU's campus community. He sets the tone for an understanding of how many white men see diversity initiatives at SU and also sets the tone for how Latinas/os experience their presence at the university generally.

Another white male adds to the overt rejection of diversity initiatives at SU with the following:

> It doesn't affect me directly, I just think the school is trying to become more diverse so it looks better. I don't think it is a bad thing, I just don't see how it affects me in any way (white, male, junior) (SU campus climate survey, 2008:150).

As is the case with many whites, he doesn't believe his whiteness has anything to do with diversity on a college campus. His position is such that he does not have to recognize his role in the systematic oppression of people of color. The university itself has enabled this position by directly and indirectly leading students to believe that diversity is about adding people of color and not systemic

change. Through a focus on initiatives presenting cultural practices, inclusion, and tolerance many university campuses are able to present a veneer of diversity while simultaneously lacking real racial integration. However, he also implies that this facade releases him from any real responsibility as a white male in regards to diversity.

I argue that the language and practices of diversity lead to the reinscribing of white supremacy at universities such as SU. They enable white students to understand their subjectivities as located externally to the "problem of lack of diversity" (Ahmed 2012). A white male senior at SU reiterates this perspective:

> Everyone striving for excellence benefits me personally. I do not care about diversity. It has nothing to do with how I study for my class or the grades that I maintain (white, male, senior) (SU campus climate survey, 2008:150).

SU's superficial approach to diversity acts as an ideological undercoat that supports and frames the institutional practices of racism, and on the micro-level, this harms the very students the university claims to serve. Most notably, the practices of diversity benefit white students, if they wish to learn, as it provides them with "cultural competency training" for a global job market. It ultimately becomes a system that is *veiled white supremacy*. It makes claims to enable students of color. However, in the end white students are provided with the actual benefits. Again, this is largely the case because diversity initiatives in higher education rarely address structural and systemic racism (Ahmed 2012).

Findings: Leisure Activities and Counter-framing at SU

For the Latinxs in this research, accessing college required many of these

students to have a bevy of skills and practices that enabled them to negotiate racism. The deployment of language, food, music, and religion by Latinxs are conceptualized by whites as active challenges to whiteness and white supremacy. The numerous attacks on Latinxs speaking Spanish, the mocking of Latinx cultural practices through Halloween costumes, and even the challenges to teaching Latinx histories in school curriculum highlight how Latinx expressions of culture are understood by whites as direct and overt challenges to white dominance and white supremacy.

This means Latinx students employed many resistant practices to challenge white supremacy. I found their social and cultural practices to be very effective in helping Latinx students negotiate and navigate white educational spaces. Educational resistance was reflected in the numerous activities Latinx students at SU participated in on and off campus. They were accustomed to seeking out organizations and activities that supported "who they are" and "what they need" to survive at a PWI such as SU.

The respondents were asked why they participated in various activities and organizations and they acknowledged their desire to be "entertained." These events offered an opportunity to "relieve stress," and "serve" the not only the Latinx but the wider community. Students also stated that they gained numerous skills for challenging racist assumptions about supposed Latinxs poor academic performance. The skills gained were confidence to answer questions, ability to effectively communicate, and time management skills. I focus on these skills as well as homeculture, counter-frames, and the overall experiences of Latinx students that were conceptualize as overt challenges to white supremacy at SU. The data collected for this chapter expound on

these discussions and are divided into the following five themes: (1) family support as counter-frame, (2) skills obtained as counter-frame, (3) Spanish language as counter-frame, (4) placating whites as counter-framing, (5) encountering everyday white racism at SU, and (5) overtly challenging white supremacy at SU.

Family Support as Counter-Frame

Parents are often the catalyst for student success whether or not the parents are college graduates. For example, Isabella (self-identified Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in engineering) discussed the support she received from her family, particularly her mother; "In school, I was always getting straight A's. I figured I might as well go to college, and my mom always encouraged me to stay in school." Parental encouragement and the desire to set an example for other family members were central reasons for many participants to pursue a university education. Isabella acknowledged the responsibility of being a role model to her younger siblings:

> I am the oldest, so my siblings they always looked up to me, even now they still do. It's crazy… [I'm the] older sister role model. But my parents definitely pressured me to apply to all the universities, finish high school, do everything, so they were always on top of me, and they still are [laughs].

Family support and fulfilling the expectations of being a role model was an important motivating factor for students to be the first person in their immediate and oftentimes extended family to graduate from college. Santiago (self-identified Mexican, Junior majoring in business) expressed his desire to earn a college degree in order to provide some economic relief for himself and his family:

> I wanted to pursue a higher education [sic], because I started working when I was nine years old. I started working in a barbershop, so I had a

> view of how I would be living if I didn't have an education. I didn't want to live like that, so, I pushed myself. And my family particularly my parents were there for me, although they couldn't help me with applying to school and everything else. But, if I needed to go somewhere they were always there to take me.

Many of the undergraduate interviewees acknowledged the economic benefit of attaining a bachelor's degree but only in the capacity that it would substantially change their families lived conditions. The ability to take care of their family dramatically influenced their decision to attend college. Santiago's experience in the labor market coupled with the backing of his parents not only contributed to his decision to attend college but motivated him to complete his program and earn a degree. However, the expectation to finish college and the pressure to succeed academically and professionally can also seem to be a hindrance to academic achievement:

> I've succeeded up until now so there is no room for failure [Do you feel like the stakes are higher?] Yeah, if I fail, I'm letting everybody [family] down. I'm basically setting the example for them, so If I don't make it in my degree and be successful, they'll say "he didn't do it and he was the smartest." I'm known as smart, do you know what I mean? [Does this have a negative impact?] Yeah, it really does. (Lucas, self-identified Mexican American, Junior majoring in engineering).

Expectations to attend college, graduate, and "succeed" can push students to work hard but often adds additional pressures (e.g. fear of failing and disappointing family members) that negatively affect academic performance. As indicated by Lucas, the anxiety and stress associated with "letting everybody down" may result in substandard performances in the classroom. Yet, their familial support is largely a means by which they were able to access and be successful at SU, and perceived pressure and consequential failure are the result of an unsupportive university. Their parents and

familial pressures should be understood as a means by which these students counter white supremacy, and the stress should be understood as resulting from white supremacy as an institutional practice that denies these Latinxs access. Challenge to white supremacy results in students feeling pressure to perform to white normative standards of academic success and professionalism.

Our participants expressed unwavering support from their parents and siblings and many cited their family as driving forces to succeed academically as well as professionally regardless of any perceived family pressures. In the context of a PWI, family support is crucial to the long-term success of Latinx students. The pressures and expectations of being a role model and being the first in their family to graduate college may have an impact on the student's willingness to directly challenge white supremacy. However, school work also forces them to seek and create safe communal spaces. The high stakes of achieving a college degree may also add to the overall stress of attending college, enduring racism, and living up to family expectations.

Moreover, many students also stated that during their free time they frequently talked to family members over the phone and regularly visited their families. Connecting with family members provide Latinx undergraduates a sense of community and the capacity to reconnect with their cultural roots. These student narratives show that family networks are critical for academic survival.

Skills Obtained as Counter-frame

Respondents also talked about some of the classroom skills they gained from participating in activities on and off campus. Leadership, confidence, and

communication were three fundamental skills obtained by students. For example, Valentina's (self-identified Hispanic, Sophomore majoring in engineering) involvement with student organizations and helped her gain confidence and reinforced her racial and ethnic identity. While holding two officer positions in student organizations, Valentina was able to express and maintain her cultural identity:

> I gain leadership skills, because I'm also the treasurer for Ballet Folklorico. I do all the paperwork and go to the meetings and stuff. I'm also the secretary. I frequently talk in front of the girls and give them directions. It gives me confidence in who I am. It doesn't put me down. It gives me a boost of showing "hey, you know, I'm Hispanic, I know how to speak Spanish, I do all these things, I don't care what you say."

Furthermore, Santiago (self-identified Mexican, Junior majoring in business) stated that his ability to communicate was a critical aspect of being a better student because it gave him the opportunity to step into various leadership roles:

> In the organization we have to communicate to get stuff done, like freshman year you don't really give a lot of communication. You are just given the communication, but you don't really give it out. I'm already a junior, so I have to actually communicate with people or else things won't get done.

Santiago was also asked how confidence helped him with his academics. His answer revealed his mastery of class material:

> I would say working in groups is better, especially if you're teaching something. Like this semester, I was working in a group, and I knew the material a lot better than some of the other students. I was actually teaching one guy, and I was teaching all of them. I actually learned it a lot better.

Latinx participants also revealed that these activities provided stress relief from paper deadlines, exams, and presentations. Activities were used by students as coping mechanisms from the pressures of school; “That’s my de-stressor, cause when I’m there [club meetings] I’m having fun, and I don’t really think about the homework I have to do or the project that is due next week. It’s just time for me to relax and to talk to other people and to be more sociable,” stated Isabella (self-identified Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in engineering). Activities such as playing an instrument were beneficial to Valentina (self-identified Hispanic, Sophomore majoring in engineering); “It [playing music] relaxes me. It takes me away from what I was stressing over. It’s a stress reliever for me, and I just love music. And I think it helps me.” Playing sports had the same affect for Victor (a self-identified Hispanic, Freshmen majoring in engineering):

> I play intramural sports. I play flag football…It’s fun. I played football in high school. I like physical activities. I like exercising… It makes me relief stress, doing something different, not just worrying about working or my assignments or anything like that, just being out there, having fun, playing football.

Activities allowed students the ability to relieve stress and return to their studies with renewed energy. Isabella (self-identified Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in engineering) described the positive academic benefits of engaging in extracurricular activities:

> If you’re in the classroom, you’re usually thinking about other things you could be doing, but you’ve already done those things. You can concentrate better. You’re more focused in the classroom. Your mind can’t really wonder ’cause you already talked to your friends. You know what’s going on.

Students that joined Latinx based university organizations received many unexpected and expected benefits such as celebrating ethnic and racial pride, establishing community, and learning about their culture:

> Coming in I was super home sick the first month. I spent the whole summer questioning myself, "should I go, should I not." And when I did get here [SU], I was like, "why am I here?" I spent a whole month like, "I miss my mom, I don't have friends." You know, and the Hispanic Organization really helped me with that… I needed to get involved because it's a good thing to do. It has kept me busy… [Why did you join a Hispanic organization?] Here in college I am involved with a lot of Hispanic centered organizations, but before coming here I really wasn't. I really do like my culture. I'm all about progressive stuff. I don't know. (Dante, self-identified Latino-Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in business).

> It just made me know that there are other people on this campus that have similar ethnicity and race, and that made me want to join it… I can interact with not just white people, [but] I can interact with people from my own race… just being more sociable and learning different things. (Victor, self-identified Hispanic, Freshman majoring in engineering).

> I wanted to do something for our Hispanic community… I was done with [mainstream white organizations]… I did not fit in. I was an outcast… I didn't want to be a part of that anymore. I wanted to do something more… [What attracted you to the Mexican Student Organization?] All the events we do are for Hispanics. It's welcoming. I just want to get the word out there, let everyone know this is us, Mexican Student Organization. We are planning to do events that reach out to other students that feel the same way I did when I was a freshmen, like not welcomed, I guess. It's a home away from home. We do a lot of socials. We bring in our Mexican culture. We have meetings. We bring in facts about Mexico and stuff like that. (Nicole, self-identified Hispanic, Senior majoring in social science).

Many of the undergraduate students viewed the skills they gained from activities as beneficial but acknowledge that too much time dedicated to outside activities could negatively impact their academic performance. However, most Latinx students attributed on-campus, student-led organizations with professional and academic growth whereas

activities perceived as recreational including playing sports, hanging out with friends, browsing the internet, and watching television programs and films were viewed as stress relieving. Students also joined Latinx based organizations to retain their cultural identity, feel safe, speak Spanish, and build community. Countering white supremacy on-campus is a process of self-reflection, community engagement, and racial awareness. The Latinx students in this section engaged in a variety of skill building activities that made them more well-rounded students and future contributors to society.

Spanish Language as Counter-frame

The U.S. education system has remained a vehicle for the denigration of the Spanish language. Throughout history schools have reinforced anti-Latinx sentiment by standardizing the use of English while institutionalizing the denial of Spanish speakers. White racist practices based on Spanish have taken many discriminatory forms such as mocking, deriding accents, and shutting down Spanish speakers (Feagin and Cobas 2014). Such language control is described by Feagin and Cobas (2014) as anti-Latinx racial-linguistic aggression.

The use of Spanish language was an important component in the leisure activities of Latinx students at SU. For example, Latinx based student organizations provided a safe environment for students to express themselves in Spanish. Weekly and bi-weekly student meetings allow Latinx students an opportunity to interact in Spanish and enjoy the company of students with similar backgrounds. These Spanish counterspaces provide students with a sense of identity and comfort:

> My freshman year I was homesick. Haha. I was by myself. I was the only one from my high school, and I just felt that I needed at least someone

> that I could talk to in Spanish 'cause I like talking in Spanish. I talk to my mom every day and my sister every day, and we talk Spanish. But it's nice to talk one-on-one. I miss that. It is an essential part of my life, Spanish… (Isabella, self-identified Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in engineering).

The Spanish language is viewed by whites as a foreign, hostile, and threatening language and immediately marks the student as a racial other. Many students sought out other students that spoke Spanish and enjoyed conversations where they could speak freely and "act natural." Language control shapes the daily interactions of Latinx students. For example, Alejandro (self-identified Mexican American and Latino, Senior majoring in humanities) described how he changed his appearance, mannerism, and language, conforming to the majority white student population:

> When I first came here I wanted to fit in right off the bat. You know, I went through all these different types of stages. And you know, at first I tried to dress like them, and then I tried to not dress like them, and then I tried to talk like them. I tried to make sure I didn't have an accent.

Several Latinx students engage in what I term as *Spanish suppression,* loosely defined as a conscious effort to refrain from speaking Spanish particularly in the presence of white American students in white institutional spaces. *Spanish suppression* is a survival mechanism that students employ to counteract covert and overt racism. In white spaces, Latinx students may not want to draw unwanted attention to their racial makeup. Spanish and therefore Latinxs are often associated with otherness, uneducated, and culturally inferior by whites (Hill, 2008). Latinx students are often forced to conform to whiteness while subduing an essential part of their being. Although *Spanish suppression* may have harmful psychological effects, students are forced to concede in order to have a chance

at the promise of social and financial rewards. However, one student was fed up with *Spanish suppression* and decided to speak Spanish freely:

> I use to feel [pause] [embarrassed to speak Spanish]… especially when I would ride the bus to class, but now I don't care. I speak my Spanish, you know. I know two languages, and I'm proud. But that was back then, I was just a scared freshman. I had a different mentality. Now I'm like, you know what, whatever, they can judge me. They can say whatever they want (Daniela, self-identified Mexican American, majoring in social science).

Another student was keenly aware of their Spanish accent and was asked if they made a considered effort to speak English without an accent:

> Sometimes when people don't understand what I am saying… there are some words in English that I cannot pronounce very well… but no that's just who I am. Why am I going to change the way I talk? That's how I grew up, that's the way I speak English (Nicole, self-identified Hispanic, Senior majoring in social science).

Historical and contemporary mechanisms regarding the Spanish language have shaped modern educational disparities in today's schools. Negative characteristics associated with Spanish (e.g. immigrant or foreigner, racially inferior, and less intelligent) along with U.S. government policies have shaped the current racialization of Latinxs in the U.S. In terms of the collegiate experience, it is clear that language is used in the maintenance of white space as noted by García (2009:101), "The Spanish language and bilingualism have become markers of being nonwhite, of being 'out of place,' thus minoritizing the position of U.S. Latinas/os and excluding them." One student named David (self-identified Mexican American, Senior majoring in engineering) discussed his experience of being mocked because of his Spanish accent:

> When I would talk with the professor or when he asked "does anyone know the answer to this question" I would answer the question, but I

> would say it with an accent and then he [white male classmate] would do these little accents like "que" or "si" [while in class?] Yes, the teacher wouldn't hear him. This was here at SU too. This is the only time I felt like that, and I guess, I remember seeing some of the girls telling the guy "hey shut-up" and "stop it that's not funny."

Latinx undergraduates are often learning under hostile conditions and forced to fit into white paradigms of behavior and acceptance. Racial exclusion has profound impacts on the educational experiences of Latinx students, influencing for example, whether or not they choose to engage in Spanish conversations on campus. This reality constrains their ability to feel like they belong, and thus has emotional and psychological consequences including internal stress, ultimately affecting their academic performance. I asked Alexander (self-identified state affiliation, Junior majoring in engineering) what he thought about Latinx students feeling uncomfortable about speaking Spanish on campus:

> I really don't know, I mean, because I'm proud of it. I guess some people are ashamed of it. They don't want people to think that their lower because their Mexican. We're always portrayed as blue collar, don't know much. They kind of want to prove that their more than that I guess, but I want to prove that I'm Mexican, you know, and I can still, do anything else.

Although Latinx undergraduates face intense racism when they speak Spanish, language was also a source of strength for many students. Asked why she joined Latinx specific organizations and activities, Isabella (self-identified Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in engineering) replied, "I just like being with Hispanic people because that's what I grew up with, and I feel comfortable with them, and like I said I like talking Spanish." Music was another activity that students use to connect with their language and culture. Samuel (self-identified Hispanic, Sophomore majoring in engineering) described the type of music he listened to and the comfort the music

provided, “I listen to Spanish rock, Spanish country, you know, regular country music, classical, symphony [but my number one] is probably Spanish-rock.” Spanish allows students to express themselves, “Through cultural nuances and representations that often have a symbolic and real significance for Chicana/os” (Villalpando, 2003:639). Spanish can also build solidarity and resistance to the dominant racial ideologies on campus.

Placating Whites as Counter-framing

As Latinx undergraduates traverse college life, they regularly encounter contradictory interactions. I found that students often faced challenges not only in the classroom but while engaging in activities outside the classroom. These experiences are contextualized by resistance, appropriation, internalized oppression, and silent contestation to anti-Latinx racism. In the following narratives, Latinx undergraduates describe their experiences with exclusion, racist joking, name-calling, and racial epithets. Crucial to this practice of placating whites is that people of color are in the difficult position of being the racial other yet simultaneously “friends” with the whites that are being racist. I add to Picca and Feagin (2007) findings that whites deploy racist ideologies and jokes in the backstage, frontstage, and transitional areas. The racist jokes revealed in this study were on the frontstage. The expectation for these Latinxs is they were expected to “take the joke” and many did, as the consequences were alienation and isolation at SU.

Whites often engage in a colorblind frame to deny their racist behavior, especially when their racism is covert. Racist jokes are another way in which whites can claim that they are not being exclusionary or discriminatory (Feagin 2010b). These racist

jokes illustrate the white team performances as they enable whites to deploy racist boundaries that confine Latinx students yet deny that racism was ever deployed. Samuel (self-identified Hispanic, Sophomore majoring in engineering) described how he felt when racist jokes were used during a group study session:

> Yeah its natural to feel offended. To some degree you're not going to take it to heart, but to some degree, you know, it's obvious that "oh this person, doesn't see me as an equal or something" you know. It basically brings the idea that this person doesn't think of me as an equal.

Not only did Samuel feel offended by racial joking, he also alludes to how the boundaries created by the racist jokes impact him and shape his experience with subordinate racial status. Moreover, this racist joking is often deflected by Latina/o students as only words or as Samuel notes, something "you don't take to heart," but interactionally speaking, they enable whites to maintain systems of oppression within these group settings as each racist joke reifies the racial hierarchy. A brief example of how this racial hierarchy is operating in the micro-interactional setting is Andrés (self-identified Hispanic, Senior majoring in engineering) description racial joking as friendly banter between colleagues:

> There's some jokes between friends. I have some [white] friends that I'm really comfortable with, and they're like "Hey esé come over here" and stuff like that. I don't find it offensive because they're my friends, you know. They say stuff like "ven pa'ca" you know. They're trying to speak Spanish, trying to talk to me in that way [exaggerated Mexican cholo or gangster accent], and I don't find it offensive at all because, you know, they're my friends and I kind of do the same to them, make one joke, two, maybe more to them too, but we have that relationship were we're not offensive towards each other. And if it gets to that point, I mean, it hasn't gotten to that point, but both sides know when to draw the line, when not to say something really offensive.

The white students are not only reinforcing their white privilege through joking but tend to use humor, sarcasm, inside jokes, and mockery to degrade and ultimately oppress Latinaxs and Latinx culture. On primarily white college campuses, racist jokes encourage the belief that students of color do not belong (Yosso et al. 2009) and are subordinate to whites. Samuel and Andrés both internalized racism by knowingly playing along with white antagonism but also acknowledging clear distinctions in power and race. Surviving in a white institutional space, Latinx undergraduates regularly accommodate, conform, and placate white oppression. One Latinx student at SU described his survival strategy:

> I try to stay under the radar. I dress like the white men of this school, speak correct and proper English, and do all I can not to be noticed in a bad way. I reserve opinions that do not fit what is popular: i.e. that are radically conservative or militantly protestant (Anonymous, self-identified Hispanic, male, Senior) (SU campus climate survey, 2008:149).

Latinx students constantly encounter and deal with racial hostility at PWIs and must conform or placate whites to avoid backlash. Racist jokes from white students maintain the racial status quo and reinforce the racial hierarchy. The quotes in this section demonstrate Latinx undergraduates are forced to comply with white racist social interactions for the purposes of self-preservation. Unfortunately, appeasing other white students becomes a normalized feature of the educational system in the U.S., as a result Latinx students unintentionally internalize racial oppression. This important finding reveals the ways in which Latinx students conform to whiteness including their presentation of self, racial identity, and everyday practices. Yet, these students employ a variety of strategies to overcome and contend with racism such as joking back,

avoidance, and reflecting on their experiences. The next section provides further evidence that Latinx undergraduates continue to face and endure overt forms of white racism on-campus.

Encountering Everyday White Racism at SU

Oftentimes Latinx students either relent or conform to white normative standards in order to get through the school year. Reluctantly, students of color frequently remain silent or are told to remain silent by their friends as an attempt not to escalate the situation. Daniela (self-identified Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in social science) described her first dining experience at SU's main food court:

> It was just normal. I'm getting food, and I was just about to sit down with my friends [five other Mexican descended students], and then these three white guys were like "where are the tortillas at?" [They came up to you guys?] Yeah, they actually sat next to me. They bothered to stand up from where they were sitting to sit next to me and tell me that, but I didn't get mad. I was just, you know, controlling myself. They also said "you know what? We need to make more Mexican friends." They were very sarcastic and joking around.
>
> And then they left laughing. I don't know what they were saying but… [How long were they there?] Probably 5-10 minutes, but my friends, one of my guy friends said something. It wasn't me cause I wasn't going to give them the… satisfaction of making me feel like that. I wanted to show that we're cool [under pressure]. This is how we are.

Everyday campus activities such as eating and hanging out with friends are not exempt from racial antagonism. Racist stereotypes, jokes, and comments by complete strangers (who are your fellow classmates and peers) adds to the larger contested social milieu of the given institution. The racist practices performed on-campus are often carried over into the wider community. In fact, it is not uncommon for Latinx students to be the targets of race-based violence in the form of racial epithets:

> It was my freshmen year and it was almost 1 [am] in the morning. I was hanging out with my friends. There was five of us. We were all Mexican, and we were in a big truck. We were in the drive thru waiting to order at [a local restaurant], and the line was moving so slow that me and one of my friends decided to get down to use the restroom. When we came back, the line had not moved. We were still in the same place, but as we were trying to get back into the truck…
>
> I guess the guys behind us were getting impatient, and we started to hear some sort of hollering and at first I didn't hear it, but our bodies were still outside, so I guess they could see how we looked, you know, or who we were, and, I heard… "hurry up you beaners!" My friend was like "did you hear that? They just called us beaners!" and I could see the anger in his face. He started getting really angry. I felt pretty upset as well. I just looked at them, you know, I didn't say anything.
>
> [How did the people who said it look?] They looked angry. They had so much anger [How was their tone?] It was more like mocking… and they were both white, and we could tell they were college students because of what they were wearing. They were wearing SU shirts…It upset me. It was my first ever kind of experience, of something, you know, it was pretty racist (Catalina, self-identified Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in social science).

Daniela and Catalina chose not to escalate the situation, instead choosing avoidance rather than direct confrontation. In white institutional spaces like SU, remaining neutral or silent in the face of white racism is the best course of action, especially with the presumption of additional physical or emotional white violence. As the next narrative shows, racial paralysis is not gender specific. Even volunteering has its racial hazards. Diego (self-identified Mexican American, Junior majoring in education) recalls his time volunteering as a server at an alumni event:

> There's a bunch of white wealthy people there, and the people that are serving them are minorities. It wasn't just Hispanics. There were Middle Easterners, Indians, Chinese, and Japanese. It was minorities doing the serving. Of course there was a couple of Anglo Americans there, you know one of our friends is white too. So he was there helping us, but for the most part it was minorities doing the catering. I thought to myself

> "what's up this?" you know. This school is predominantly white, "why is it only the minorities doing this?" It was something weird.
>
> Anyways, we're in a little group right, and this lady without even saying excuse me, nothing, you know, she comes up to us and says "what country are you all from?" I got a look on my face like "whoa what are you talking about?" and nobody said nothing. The fact that she said that it, I was like "wow" but how can you say that? How can you be so educated and you just say… without even saying excuse me or anything.

Although Diego did not confront the white female asking questions, his displeasure and anger were recognized in his facial expressions by the other servers. Diego's friends pleaded with him to remain calm and not to make a big deal about it. The other student volunteers recognized Diego's anger but tried to downplay the incident. As a result, the instruments of racism are preserved, white privilege remains intact and whites are not held responsible for their offensive behavior.

Latinx undergraduate students at Southern University encounter white racism on a daily basis. The participants were well aware of covert and overt forms of racism, but they usually did not directly challenge their white aggressors. These racist incidents show how Latinx students are forced to respond and counter white racism by ignoring, defending, playing along, and internalizing. Their narratives also demonstrate how racism becomes socially reproduced and normalized at PWIs.

Overtly Challenging White Supremacy at SU

In the context of white institutional spaces, Latinx undergraduate students often rely on their home-culture frame (i.e. speaking Spanish) and anti-racist counter-frames to challenge, resist, and survive white supremacy. At any point in their collegiate career, Latinx students are susceptible to white racist colorblind ideologies, actions, and

violence. The interview findings indicate that Latinx students are often the university's true practitioners of respect, acceptance, and equality, whereas white students are constantly stereotyping, degrading, and marginalizing Latinxs while refusing to evaluate their own role in sustaining white hegemony, the racial hierarchy, and the unjust privileges of whiteness.

Latinx undergraduate students often encounter racial oppression and choose not to confront white racist behavior for fear of material or social retribution from their classmates, professors, or administrators. Many students simply "ignore" overt racism and instead choose self-preservation. Recall Catalina's (self-identified Mexican American, Sophomore majoring in social science) violent experience with white male students shouting racist epithet at her and her friends. When asked to explain her reasoning behind her initial silence, she recalled:

> What is there that we can do? We're not going to go and get on the same level and call them names. What's the good in that? They [her male friends and the white male attackers] are just going to go back and forth calling each other names. What are you going to get out of that? Just ignore it and move on, and maybe they'll [white males] think "well this doesn't affect them as much as we want them to be affected," you know. We were like, "that was really messed up." It did anger us. Maybe my friends had experienced that before, but that was my first time I had experienced it. You saw the ugly side of not just Southern University but in general. Random people you meet in college, they're all not going to like you. They're all not going to welcome you.

Physical violence is a real and perceived threat, especially if whites are angrily yelling unprovoked racial epithets. In this case, a late night encounter with white college students renders Latinx college students feeling afraid and powerless. While undergoing

white incapacitation “ignore it and move on” may be the best survival mechanism a young Latinx college student has at their disposal.

In the following two cases, the interviewees were able to verbally object and physically assert themselves in the presence of white antagonism. These students like the other respondents are able to recognize racist behavior and provide their own sociological insights to systemic racism. For example, Alejandro (self-identified Mexican American and Latino, Senior majoring in humanities) actively described a dehumanizing incident involving a white male college student and a Latino restaurant server. Attending a formal dinner in an off-campus popular restaurant sponsored by a white-based sorority, Alejandro witnessed a white male attendee mocking a Latino server by referring to him as “Paco” instead of using his real name:

> I stood up and said, “Listen bitch! This guy’s name is not Paco! Get that crap right!” I told him that. I told him like that to his face, and I also told him, “Take off that stupid bow tie!” He had a little bow tie on. Who wears a bow tie, really? That’s not even in style, and I was like, “Get the bow tie! Take it off! Go do your stuff somewhere else! Don’t be an obnoxious piece of crap!” I told him like that, in front of everybody. I wasn’t messing around. I was the only Latino at the table, and I didn’t feel intimidated!

Operating out of a home culture frame, Alejandro expressed a sense of shared humanity by publicly standing up for a fellow Latina/o/x. As the only Latinx guest at the dinner, Alejandro displayed incredible bravery, cultural pride, solidarity, and moxie. Alejandro’s word choice was part of his attempt to resist white patriarchal oppression. His attempt to de-power the white antagonist was reinforced by his perception to be physically threatening.

Similar to Alejandro, Martín (self-identified Latino and Salvadorian American, Sophomore majoring in social science) also shared his confrontation with a white racist student as well as his personal connection to the larger Latinx community:

> If I hear white people talking bad about Mexicans or any Latino group, I get pissed off. I end up taking their voice, the position of the Mexican, and then they'll [whites] say, "Why do you care? You are not Mexican." And I will respond, "I do care because I know that you identify me as Mexican, and you just assume that I'm like that. [all the racial stereotypes attributed to Mexicans] I know how you think. I know when you say Mexican you just mean Brown people."

As someone who does not identify as Mexican, Martín shares a similar racial experience with other Latinxs and is especially sympathetic to racism directed at Mexicans because he has been the target of Mexican stereotypes and racist epithets in the past. Martín relayed such a case when he was attending an off-campus party. He recalled an incident when he was called "wetback" by a white male:

> I was at a party once. Some guy called me a wetback cause I was talking to a Mexican girl about making [names a nation-state] Democratic by using Latinos as a voting bloc. And he was like, "Fuck that! You know, you all are never going to take over!" It was just us three, and he was just like you know, "Those fucking wetbacks are trying to take over the country!" I guess he was upset over the discourse that was going on. He said, "Oh you're trying to take over my state, you people!" It was definitely nativist.
>
> The girl that was there with us was trying to calm us down. She yelled at us to "Chill! Chill," but at that point I was pissed. I was in his face. I told him, "What are you saying? That is so fucked up!" And I remember the entire time I was just in shock. I was like, 'Really? You just said that to me?!' I told him, "Bro, I outta kick your ass!" And he replied, "I wish you would!" We continued to argue but nothing happened. People at the party ended up separated us.

The white male student employed a nativistic (as astutely pointed out by Martín) white framing of Mexicans (and Latinxs) as threatening (Chavez 2013). The notion of

Latinxs becoming empowered both politically and numerically enraged the white student and made him react in a vicious manner, “Fuck that, you know, you all are never going to take over!” The white racist framing of Mexicans as invaders, intent on displacing whites, stems from the white imaginary which often plays on fears of an impending race war. The use of a racial epithet was used to devalue Martín and outright reject the idea that Latinxs could ever gain power democratically. At this point, Martín was forced to physically challenge the white student or concede. In this case, the challenge was accepted but ultimately not carried out. In fact, the physical threat was legitimate as other partygoers had to step in and separate the two in order to deescalate the incident. Martín could have, “ignore[d] it and move on,” but again due to his shared humanity and common Latina/o/x identity, he took deliberate action against the white perpetrator. Even party’s off-campus and discussions about political representation are not protected from white racist inquiry and discrimination. The audacity of the white student to interject with such a threatening response is representative of white privilege and the ways systemic racism operate at PWIs.

Latinx students utilize oppositional counter-framing to provide alternatives to white ideologies and racism. Although Alejandro and Martín were able to challenge the anti-Latinx sub-frame on their own terms, many Latinx students do not share the same fearlessness in the presence of white antagonism. Latinx agency remains difficult to navigate in the face of white racial subordination. Their reactions or non-reactions indicate the power of racial oppression and the various tools whites have at their disposal: racial epithets, racialized stereotypes, and name mocking. Racial insults

demean, belittle, and ultimately racializes Latinxs while simultaneously sustaining the racial hierarchy. Despite obvious racial tension, Latinx students at SU often resist and actively challenge white discrimination by employing numerous strategies of resistance such as creating spaces, using Spanish, or as the above examples illustrate verbally contesting racist remarks.

SU has a normalized culture of white supremacy, but the impact of white institutional ideology does not end once students are off campus. Students continue to be marginalized and excluded beyond the confines of the university. As a result, student interactions, class performance, and the leisure experiences of Latinx undergraduates are dramatically shaped by white supremacy. Latinx are often forced to make serious decisions about how to deal with racist hostility. The examples in this section emphasize how Latinx students employ a cache of responses to deal with white racism, such as passivity and confrontation. Going out to eat, having dinner, volunteering, going out to a party, or simply attending class becomes a complex act of conformity, ethnic and racial solidarity, resistance, and coping to white space.

Conclusion

Latinx students at SU engaged in a variety of activities that helped them navigate their way through the college experience. Yet, as demonstrated in our findings, Latinx students often face racial hostility even while performing in extracurricular activities. These activities are also spaces and locations were Latinx students can express their culture and relieve tension from racial oppression and the demands of being a college student. Examining leisure activities and counterspace formation in the context of a PWI

enhances our understanding of the ways in which micro, meso, and macro level forces influence students of color. In other words predominantly white institutions like SU reflect larger societal factors like government educational policies, university missions and values, and forms of oppression and exploitation on the individual level. Latinx students participated in a wide range of activities; the variation in their choice of activities reflects the diversity within the Latinx community. As a group, Latinxs are difficult to generalize as the range of their activities attest to the complexity of this group.

CRT, LatCrit, color-blind racism, white space, and the white racial frame help to better understand why racism and educational disparities exist for Latinxs. Using structural race as a theoretical framework furthers Latinx educational research by exploring Latinx experiences while attending white institutional spaces. Structural theories of race provide insight and exposes the ways Latinxs challenge prevailing Eurocentric ideology and academic discourse. Latinx students can be seen as instrumental in educational advancement by allowing their voices to be heard and valued. Presenting counter-stories and narratives reveals marginalized and subordinated perspectives that can be utilized to dismiss claims of a post racial society. Our findings indicate how white institutional spaces like SU weave racism into the structure of the university and how these policies and practices hinder Latinx student success. As colleges promote meritocracy and remain colorblind, they preserve white supremacy while simultaneously silencing students of color.

Future findings will continue to focus on the activities of Latinx undergraduate students and the subsequent spaces they create and maintain while on white campuses. Additional inquiry concerning group identity, language usage, appropriation, and resistance are needed in order to recognize the need to address educational diversity, racial microaggressions, and increased enrollment and graduation rates. Empirical data will validate the importance of examining leisure activities in conjunction with the academic achievement of Latinx students. Continued research in this area will contribute to the overall understanding of the Latinx undergraduate collegiate experience and provides universities sufficient evidence to create and implement targeted programs designed for the long-term success of the educational attainment of Latinas/os in universities throughout the U.S.

CHAPTER VI

COUNTER-FRAMING AND THE STUDENT PROTEST MOVEMENT

Introduction

The findings based on Latina/o/x student experiences from the two previous chapters are here further contextualized within the national campus movement. In that movement, Latinx students together with other SOC, and including white students, joined Black students as they publicly challenge university administrators and officials by asking for campus-wide reform. Motivated by anti-police violence campaigns, more and more students became politically active and racially conscious and many were emboldened to enact change on their college campuses. Students of color at universities and colleges throughout the U.S. organized against overt and covert racism. Latinx students along with Black students have been at the forefront of campus demonstrations, sit-ins, protests, and negotiations. Students of color at SU have expressed similar sentiments by organizing talks, demonstrations, and voicing their concerns. It is also important to note that Black and Latinx students are highly represented and are in many of the leadership positions spearheading on-campus student organizations. The height of the student protest movement was fall 2015; however, the roots of the movement date back to 2013-2014, particularly to the police shootings of young unarmed Black men (Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Freddy Gray, and Trayvon Martin to name a few).

Community and national student protests are indicative of current U.S. race relations. Many students of color have felt discrimination in the form of racism and have

decided to voice their concerns. The new and current generation of college students was influenced by societal events. The campus student movement is a direct reaction to state violence, police shootings, and the subsequent murders and deaths of Black men and women (Natasha McKenna, Tanisha Anderson, Michelle Cusseaux, Aura Rosser, Maya Hall, and Sandra Bland to name a few). The August 2014 police killing of 18 year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO., set the stage for the current backlash from students, activists, and concerned citizens regarding racial injustice, police profiling, and inequalities across all institutions. Concerned Student 1950 (the year Black students were first admitted to the University of Missouri) arose from the Michael Brown murder trial which failed to convict the white male officer, Darren Wilson, who shot and killed Brown.

The student protest movement picked up momentum when Black students at the University of Missouri (Mizzou) began to counter the inherently racist practices on campus. Black and other students of color at Mizzou had been routinely mistreated, and many responded by organizing and contesting white racism. They fought against white supremacy in the form of racist slurs, physical assaults, and hate crimes. Racial bigotry was and continues to be the norm at the University of Missouri; in fact, the student body president Payton Head, a Black male, was called the n-word and demeaned by his fellow white students passing by in a truck. The responses to the racial tensions at Mizzou intensified when a Black graduate student named Jonathan Butler staged a hunger strike

to demand the resignation of President Tim Wolfe.[3] With the university standing to lose over 1 million dollars should the Mizzou Tigers football team forfeit one of their games, the university began to relent and seriously listen and negotiate with the student leaders. The biggest concession was the resignation of President Wolfe and Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

In the fall of 2015, the nationwide student protest movement impacted countless colleges and universities. Student organizations, groups, and associations began to coalesce and bring forth their demands and grievances. Fed up with slow responses from administration and other school officials, many students took matters into their own hands and created plans of action. Students of color (SOC) were actively fighting against lack of resources, inadequate courses, retention, reporting and transparency, lack of faculty of color, and they also were holding school administrators accountable. Other demands included a direct recognition of systemic and institutional racism on behalf of the university. Students mandated that the president of their school recognize, acknowledge, and apologize for past and current racial injustices. At the University of Missouri, for example, the student led-organization Concern student 1950 addressed their concerns:

> We demand that University of Missouri System President, Tim Wolfe, writes a hand-written apology to Concerned Student 1-9-5-0 demonstrators and holds a press conference in the Mizzou Student Center reading the letter. In the letter and at the press conference, Tim Wolfe must acknowledge his white privilege, recognize that systems of oppression exits, and provide a verbal commitment to fulfilling

[3] Eligon, John and Richard Pérez-Peña. 2015. "University of Missouri Protests Spur a Day of Change." *The New York Times*, November 9. Retrieved May 24, 2016 (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/10/us/university -of-missouri-system-president-resigns.html).

> Concerned Student 1-9-5-0 demands (University of Missouri Demands by #ConcernedStudent1950, thedemands.org).

Although acknowledgement of unjust racial practices were part of many demands, they were not the most recurring. Other demands that were not as salient included calls for resignation. However, very few calls were openly expressed; this was in contrast to popular mainstream beliefs about unruly and unreasonable students exercising their political capital. The few calls for resignation mirrored the following: "We demand the University System of Georgia Board of Regents establishes Interim president Jean Bartels as President of Georgia Southern University" (Georgia Southern University NAACP Student Chapter, thedemands.org). Students also wanted to create new positions focused on diversity and inclusion, and these new appointments are intended to address racial oppression and bring stronger race relations campus wide.

There were also calls for safe spaces, such as multicultural centers, or race-specific rooms/centers. Housing in terms of location and affordability was also a point of contestation. Health care, health centers, and health care workers of color were also part of the demands, specifically mental health care professionals that have experience working with populations of color. There were also two additional categories that the data fit into: radical change and other demands. Radical change was minute compared to the rest of the data and students asked for widespread change such as tens of millions of dollars and reparations. Radical not because those are not legitimate and rational requests but because the resistance from white people would make those realities nearly impossible. Other demands included requests that were specific to buildings, programs, or personnel at their respective colleges and universities. The above described demands

were the ways in which SOC articulated, expressed, and discussed their desire to change their college culture and end racism and discrimination on campus.

The quotes presented throughout the chapter are directly from "the demands" website and represent, as accurate as possible, all available information. The college or university is listed and when available the student organization.

New Hires and Retention: Faculty and Staff of Color

Most colleges and universities profess to be racially diverse yet their employee demographics tell a radically different story. Professors, staff, and administrators of color are often passed over for white employees. The hiring practices of colleges and universities are inherently unequal and tend to favor white candidates. As a result, college campuses are overwhelmingly white and tend to cater to white students. Students of color (SOC) are acutely aware of their social position and the school's environment, which is often fraught with colorblind ideology and racialized practices. Institutionalized racism in the form of exclusion particularly among college and university positions are a point of emphasis for students across the U.S. The following section focuses on the call for new hires of faculty and staff of color, along with additional support for existing employees of color.

This section underscores the range of demands made by student organizations regarding the lack of racially diverse personnel on college campuses. Reading the demands and analyzing the content revealed several key points worth discussing, SOC argued for equal representation among faculty, staff, and administrators. Having authority figures that can relate to their racial and ethnic experiences is essential to

fostering positive relationships and contributes to SOC academic performance. Role models of color are instrumental in creating safe spaces and providing students the necessary comfort and feelings of inclusion. Throughout the demands, students requested, demanded, and pleaded that their colleges add racial minorities to faculty, staff, and administrative positions. They requested departmental hires, administrative posts, and staff positions. These hires were not always directly related to race, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender college and university positions. Students did not just want faculty of color teaching racially conscious courses, but health care professionals, counselors, and college officials of color. Bard College and Duke University students made such requests:

> Bard College must hire more people of color as faculty members, counselors, and administrative staff members. It is unacceptable that the vast majority of professors and staff members are white. People of color must be adequately represented on this campus, especially considering the rising population of black and brown students at this institution (Bard College Demands).

> Increased Diversity in High-Ranking Faculty and Administration A. Increase the amount of women, Black, Asian, Latino/a, Native American and Queer people of color serving as faculty. B. Attain representation of women and professors of color in regular ranked and tenured faculty positions equal to their representation in the student population by 2020 (Duke University Demands by Black Voices).

Notice the tone in Bard's College demands. SOC are clearly upset and annoyed with status quo politics. Race is centralized among their demands for diversity and inclusion; "It is unacceptable that the vast majority of professors and staff members are white." They argue that this does not reflect the rising demographics of POC and SOC. The faculty and staff at Bard College and many other colleges in the U.S. are

disproportionately white. One way to increase diversity is to hire, retain, and emphasize bringing in candidates of color. The student group Black Voices at Duke University would like to see more "women, Black, Asian, Latino/a, Native American, and Queer people of color" in faculty positions. Like other student organizations, Duke SOC issue an exact deadline for their requests. Setting a deadline is a strategic tactic by the students. They are privy and understand that most of their demands will not be met because higher educational bureaucracies move relatively slow. Having a flexible timeline shows the college that students are willing to work with the administration rather than posing impossible standards. However, reducing the pressure on the university can have negative consequences. Mainly, they will not feel a sense of urgency to satisfy student demands. Both Bard and Duke student activists recognize the changing demographics and encourage their institutions to acknowledge and reflect the larger community. Students of color at SU have also organized against racism on-campus and continue to challenge the university to make significant changes.

Many other student organizations reiterated the same sentiments and express their desire to have an increase of professors of color. The People of Color Coalition at the University of Baltimore recognizes the historical barriers facing racial minorities seeking entry into the professoriate:

> Historically people of color have faced many overt obstacles to achieve the same successes of their white counterparts when it comes to the working world. Institutional barriers still exist this day that prevent minorities from reaching positions they would be fit for. We want to see this rectified (University of Baltimore demands by the People of Color Coalition).

Inexperience and lack of qualifications are euphemisms that white hiring committees utilize to reject candidates of color. Systemic and institutionalized racism help explain the white gatekeeping and networking that routinely go on behind the scenes. That is why student organizations like the Coalition of Black Students at Mississippi State University (MSU) and students at the University of Toronto (TU) argue for the inclusion of faculty and staff of color:

> We want African American faculty to be representative of the student population, and we want to see more tenured and tenure-track professors who look like us, come from similar backgrounds as us, and who we can turn to for academic mentors and leaders on campus (Mississippi State University demands by Coalition of Black Students).

> One of the primary experiences students referenced was a frustration at never seeing themselves represented amongst even our teaching assistants, let alone their faculty and administration. This lack of representation, even in programs where we would be represented. This is a major issue that the University of Toronto should investigate and seek to address, in the same manner as would be done if this was an issue of gender (University of Toronto demands).

SOC from MSU want faculty that not only "look like us" but "come from similar backgrounds," and it is not enough to simply adhere to identity politics. TU students harkened similar tones as they expressed "frustration at never seeing themselves represented amongst even our teaching assistants, let alone their faculty and administration." Students of color at MSU and TU want professors and staff members that are going to advocate on their behalf and provide mentorship. SOC need university employees that are politically engaged and racially conscious. In order to reinforce their point, the Coalition of Black Students gave an exact break down of faculty percentages and salaries:

> Minority faculty representation. (A) 4.8% of all full-time faculty at MSU are African American, yet 21% of the student population is African American. (B) Professors in the year 2014-2015 made $98,776. (C) 85.7% of Professors on campus are white—3.47% are black. (D) This means that only 3.47% of black faculty are tenured full professors. (E) Associate Professors in the year of 2014-2015 made $77, 593. (F) 80.2% of Associate Professors on campus are white—3.67% are black. (G) This means that only 3.67% of black faculty are tenured associate professors. (H) When both categories are totaled, only around 3.57% of black faculty are tenured/tenured-track professors (Mississippi State University demands by Coalition of Black Students).

Based on the statistics outlined by the Coalition of Black Students, and given Mississippi's large Black population, one would be hard pressed to make a case against hiring new Black faculty members. The inequities in terms of the percentage of the Black faculty present at MSU and the gaps in wages are stark and problematic. Less than 4% of tenured professors at MSU are Black. These statistics largely hold true throughout the U.S. and beyond. Universities and colleges are failing to train, hire, and retain faculty of color. On the other hand, white professors seem to be doing just fine and often exceed the white population in the U.S. and therefore earn a disproportionate amount of faculty salaries.

The People of Color Coalition at the University of Baltimore provides some solutions to bridging the gap between white and racial minority professors. The students pinpoint policies they believe will help equalize the playing field and increase faculty diversity and opportunities for minority candidates:

> We firmly believe in affirmative action and equal employment policies because the landscape today does not adequately make it fair enough for candidates of color to achieve positions or reach opportunities that should be available to them (University of Baltimore demands by the People of Color Coalition).

Affirmative action often has a negative connotation when brought up in discussions of equality in higher education. Conservative law makers and white students claiming reverse racism are opposed to quotas, affirmative action, and policies designed to include more students and employees of color. Yet, in actuality white females are the biggest beneficiaries of affirmative action, but ironically often challenge and admonish policies resembling affirmative action (Goodwin, 2012). SOC may favor affirmative action because the programs attempt to stem past and current inequities in higher education largely based on racial assumptions of intellect and other factors like residential segregation, inadequate public school resources, and exclusionary practices. The People of Color Coalition offers a few very specific solutions to rectify the matter:

> We want to see tenured and tenured-track faculty diversity increase by 20% and a 10% increase overall in faculty diversity by the 2018-19 Academic Year. Many studies show the negative impact on the learning experiences (and life experiences) of people of color at institutions where the diversity of the faculty and staff does not adequately reflect the diversity of the student body (University of Baltimore demands by the People of Color Coalition).
>
> Join the Ban the Box movement in respect to admissions and the hiring of staff and faculty. In order to improve the relationship between the greater St. Louis community and Washington University.
> Incentivize community-based participatory research on the St. Louis region for faculty and students by the establishment of awards or other forms of recognition for those whose research directly benefits our local community (Washington University, St. Louis demands).

POC at the University of Baltimore target specific increases for tenured/non-tenured faculty of color. Similar to those at Bard and Duke, Baltimore students proclaim the need for equivalent racial minorities with regards to faculty-student ratio. They cite studies that "show the negative impact on the learning experiences (and life experiences)

of people of color." Professors of color will change more than the campus culture. They will make a difference for generations of students and help create true diversity and equality throughout society. Students at Washington University call for additional "underrepresented faculty and administration hires across all disciplines" to cultivate a more welcoming and racially conscious campus environment. They offer one hiring and one community solution to improve on-campus racial and ethnic relations: (1) forego the harsh requirements and employee disqualification based on previous and sometimes unrelated criminal record, and (2) incentivize and conduct research on the broader community. These two suggestions would go a long way in making the university serve the community rather than the other way around. Colleges and universities need to bring in people from the local neighborhoods rather than restrict their access.

Transparency is critical to any large bureaucracy and helps the students and the community hold administrators accountable. Bias, discrimination, and racism are serious concerns when a disproportionate amount of professors are white. Hiring committees that are exclusively white or have people of color that operate out of the white racial frame are potentially reproducing white norms and space, and this comes into play when they decide which candidate to hire:

> We want an investigation into the HR screening and selection process. We have concerns in regards to the overall control and potential bias present in this process. We also want at least one of all finalist brought to campus to be a person of color (University of Baltimore demands by the People of Color Coalition).
>
> We demand the university provide the Dean of Diversity and Inclusion and Title IX officer with additional staff to aid in the search processes to hire professors from underrepresented identities in disciplines that reside outside of their racial and sexual/gender identity. We demand these

> professors specifically be hired in STEM, English, Music, Theater, Politics & Government, Business, and International Political Economy which are disciplines traditionally filled by dominant identity groups (University of Puget Sound demands by The Advocates for Institutional Change).

The University of Baltimore's faculty hiring practices are questioned and the students demand at least one person of color be interviewed for open positions. Although the hiring committee may invite a person of color for an interview that does not mean that person will have an equal opportunity of getting hired, however it is a start in the right direction. Since representative statistics are unfavorable for faculty of color any progress in the hiring arena can be viewed as positive (Turner, González, and Wood, 2008; Smith, Altbach, and Lomotey, 2002). Yet, the results may not indicate that same hope. Students at the University of Puget Sound methodologically request the specific disciplines they would like to see underrepresented faculty appointments. They also call for accountability and even suggest to have "additional staff to aid in the search processes." The need for clear, direct, and precise language and policies to create better pathways for faculty of color cannot be overstated. Students across North America have astutely brought attention, provided solutions, and have worked to advocate for the presents of professors of color at our institutions.

Faculty, staff, and administrators of color are at the top of the demand list for SOC. Furthermore, American universities and colleges must acknowledge and recognize they have a serious problem with the disproportionately low amount of faculty, staff, and administrators of color on their campuses. SOC provided statistical data on employees of color at their schools, and nationally that can be applied to the majority of campuses

across the U.S. Professors of color remain a critical area of need and one student protestors routinely pointed out as relevant, critical, and beneficial to not just students of color but to the entire campus community and beyond. Implementing new and transparent hiring practices will begin to start a process that is more open and potentially unbiased and merit based. The challenges for universities to implement the changes outlined by student activists require significant shifts in missions, goals, and campus policies. As long as the great society remains racist, college and universities are going to have a hard time shedding institutional forms of oppression and ridding themselves of race-based normative practices.

Racial Awareness Curriculum

The last section covered the call for an increase in faculty, staff, and administrations of color with an emphasis on professors of color. This section underscores the need for a culturally and socially relevant curriculum focused on accurate histories and realities of people of color (González, 2015). It is not enough to have faculty of color if they are teaching and transmitting un-critical and un-informed knowledge. Again, not to fall into the identity politics trap and hire a person of color for the sake of being a person of color, professors need to teach current, reflective, and vetted materials that are going to develop sharp critical thinkers. Therefore, developing curriculum that deconstructs all the "isms," power dynamics, forms of oppression, exploitation, and hidden truths and realities is instrumental in fostering open environments and knowledge. SOC are often not exposed to their histories, struggles, and ways of understanding their racialized experiences. Most public high schools are not

preparing SOC and white students to deal with ever-changing racial paradigms in the present form.

The following section highlights the student demands when it comes to reforming pedagogy, reassessing curriculum, and general racial awareness education. Becoming racially conscious or aware of the racial politics of the day, and understanding systemic racism, institutional racism, and colorblind racism are systematically repeated by the students. The demands often start with a recognition to the problem, in this case Eurocentric based curriculum that fails to contextualize the complexities of the U.S. experience, let alone the racialized experiences of SOC. The Black student group, Concerned Student 1950 at the University of Missouri, called for more mindful curriculum that considers everyone not just SOC:

> We demand that the University of Missouri creates and enforces comprehensive racial awareness and inclusion curriculum throughout all campus departments and units, mandatory for all students, faculty, staff and administration. This curriculum must be vetted, maintained, and overseen by a board comprised of students, staff and faculty of color (University of Missouri Demands by #ConcernedStudent1950).

White students also benefit from a stronger curriculum focused on race and racism, knowledge is not exclusive to people of color. In fact, whites are the beneficiaries of the racial hierarchy and have the power to change the social system. SOC will absolutely benefit from critical dialogue concerning race, class, and gender histories and politics in the classroom but whites should be just as focused in learning about their white privilege and what they can do to limit oppression. If they are truly committed to diversity, inclusion, liberty, and freedom, then whites must be willing to learn and cede some of their power and control. U.S. colleges and universities champion inclusion and diversity

but student activists are the ones calling for innovative approaches to pedagogy and racially relevant curriculum on their campuses:

> Reform pedagogy & curriculum to reduce Eurocentric focus and address racism and diversity in the classroom (Boston College demands by Eradicate #BostonCollegeRacism).
>
> We demand an overhaul of the curriculum that includes and highlights the contributions of people of color across all disciplines. We also demand that this curricular overhaul be student-centered by actively including students of color in the voting, negotiation and decision-making process in academic curriculum committees (Simmons College demands).
> We demand that Sarah Lawrence require all students at the graduate and undergraduate level to partake in an anti-racist course or class for credit, such as is required for Physical Education (Sarah Lawrence College demands).

Incorporating a course that addresses systemic racism, sexism, and classism would increase student and faculty awareness and help stem some of the overt forms of oppression. All students need to be exposed to dissertations, books, articles, presentations, and other forms of knowledge that analyze, critique, and reveal society's inconsistencies. Yet, not all types of education and curriculum are equal. For instance, SOC at Babson College called for an institutionalized first-year course that addresses race relations albeit with a tone-downed "diversity" approach, Vanderbilt University students called for a "cultural competency" course and University of Wyoming students demanded "cultural relevancy and awareness" as a course requirement:

> We request the redesign of the First-Year Seminar as a key touch point to include more conversations around diversity, inclusion, socio-economic diversity, etc.; to promote cultural awareness, difference, acceptance, and sensitivity. a. Similar to Alcohol-Edu that students are required to take prior to coming to Babson, they can take an online "Diversity-Edu" course in the same manner b. Pair an online module with in-class dialogue (Babson College demands).

> Curriculum A. Integrate issues of diversity, power, equity, and inclusion into curricula and classroom experiences across departments and disciplines. B. Establish core curriculum requirement for every school focused on the experience of racial and ethnic minorities, and cultural competency (Peabody, Arts and Science, Engineering, Blair School, the Graduate School, the School of Nursing Divinity School, Owen School of Business, Law School) on campus taught by full faculty. C. Ensure that the undergraduate first-year experience incorporates a curriculum that integrates issues of diversity, power, equity, and inclusion by ensuring training for VUCeptors, RAs, and other entities who have significant contact with first year students (Vanderbilt University demands by Hidden Dores).
>
> We demand, all freshmen and first year students be required to take and pass a course with a curriculum focused on social justice concepts, cultural relevancy, and cultural awareness (University of Wyoming demands by #BreakthrUWYO).

The mandatory first-year seminar/course for incoming freshman is a common demand made by SOC; however, these informative spaces need to address the foundational elements that create and sustain racial oppression. Discussions about systemic and institutional racism, colorblind racism, imperialism, and capitalism need to be contextualized with conversations about white privilege, white supremacy, and white power. It is not enough to have courses on diversity and cultural competency; colleges should strive to dramatically reconfigure what they teach and prepare students for a racially mixed society.

Similar to Babson College and Vanderbilt University students, other SOC are calling for a restructuring of general requirements by adding or replacing existing coursework with a class strictly focused on racial issues. Student activists at Emory University, St. Louis Christian College, and Colgate University demanded faculty of

color teach courses that cover histories of POC, study the concept of race, and examine racist ideologies:

> We demand that Emory University follow through on this recommendation and create a General Education Requirement for courses that explore issues significantly affecting people of color (Emory University demands by the Black Students at Emory University).
>
> We demand that St. Louis Christian College creates and enforces a mandatory semester long class requirement for all undergraduate students about the history of racism within the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ or a general education race, ethnicity, and racism course. We demand that this course be implemented by Spring 2017 and taught by a black professor (St. Louis Christian College demands).
>
> We ask… that our CORE curriculum be revised to bring in explicit study and understanding of systemic power dynamics and inequities; and how these shape even our most personal relationships with others and ourselves a. including revising the GE requirement so it reflects the original proposal where there are discussions about international relations, imperialism, privilege, political conversations about "studying abroad," critical conversations about "difference" etc. Professors should also be capable of having those conversations as a prerequisite for teaching the course. b. additionally, ensuring the CORE courses include national and worldwide perspectives, not just Western traditions (Colgate University demands by the Association of Critical Collegians).

Student activists have demanded administrators and faculty reassess graduation requirements by including new courses focused on race, racism, or as Black students. Emory University stated, "Explore issues significantly affecting people of color." Students at St. Louis Christian College advocated for race courses taught by a Black faculty member. Reiterating the first section that called for additional faculty of color, SOC recognize the importance to include an instructor from the community under study. Moreover, the Association of Critical Collegians at Colgate University, offer strict criteria for professors teaching race courses. These students require faculty members to

hold “discussions about international relations, imperialism, privilege, political conversations” particularly in the global context “not just Western traditions.” This bold stance shows the importance SOC place on learning and further demonstrates their desire to learn. Redesigning the core curriculum, graduation requirements, including mandatory first-year courses on race, remains a daunting task but one that is possible and necessary to establish a broader understanding of power and race in the U.S. and the world.

As stated above cultural competency or cultural awareness does not sufficiently address the systemic nature of racism. Racial awareness starts to create conversations and dialogue specifically examining race and racism. Students at Brandeis University and Purdue University recognize the importance of curriculum focused on racial equality and call for comprehensive racial awareness that target people from all racial and ethnic groups:

> Implement educational pedagogies and curriculums that increase racial awareness and inclusion within ALL departments and schools (Brandeis University demands by Concerned Students 2015).

> We demand that Purdue create and enforce a required comprehensive racial awareness curriculum for all students, staff, faculty, administration, and police. This curriculum must be vetted and overseen by a board of diverse students, faculty, and staff (Purdue University demands).

Racial awareness literature should be part of a wider effort to decolonize higher education and establish knowledge that connects history, politics, and economics to race, gender, class, sexuality, and identity. SOC from Brandeis University and Purdue University understand that the future of their/our communities are at stake. These student activists bring attention to the need for innovative pedagogy, curriculum on race, and

oversight. Changing curriculum and pedagogy also requires departmental and institutional change. Other students across the U.S. have demand that their colleges either create new departments centered on people of color or further support existing departments. Michigan State University and St. Louis University have stated their desire to financially support and establish robust African American centers of learning:

> We demand the establishment of a Department of African American and African Studies with an annual supplies, services, and equipment budget of at least $200,000, twenty graduate assistant lines for the doctoral program, and, at minimum, ten tenure-stream faculty members by Fall 2017 (Michigan State University demands by #liberatemsu).
>
> Increased budget for the African American Studies program (St. Louis University demands).

Michigan State University SOC have also demanded a "College of Race, Class, and Gender Studies" that would house "a Department of Chicano and Latino Studies, Department of Women and Gender Studies, and a Department of Native American Studies" (Michigan State University demands by #liberatemsu). For many Black student activists the demands for freedom, justice, and liberation most often include other racial groups including whites. Black students and other SOC have truly demonstrated a willingness to enact equality and have showcased acceptance in the face of often hostile white racism. Students outside of the U.S. (Canada) also have a critical lens when understanding their social predicament. SOC from the University of Toronto and the University of Guelph include a historical account of slavery, point out the omission of facts, and trace the abuse and mistreatment Blacks have endured. The students justify their demands by resurfacing this brutal past at the hands of white beneficiaries:

> Develop a two year plan to establish, adequately fund and support a standalone African & Caribbean Studies Department. Despite Canada's history with respect to enslavement, the benefits Canada received as a result of enslavement, establishment of Black refugee communities, Canada's continued direct involvement in the economics and politics of the Caribbean and Canada's role as one of the most favored destinations for diasporic migrants of African descent, there is very little support given to the existing undergraduate African Studies and Caribbean Studies programs. Even more egregiously, there are no such programs in existence at the graduate level; an omission we doubt could occur with other regions of the world and be ignored in assessments of U of T's rankings (University of Toronto demands).
>
> Develop a plan to establish a fully funded and otherwise supported standalone Black, African, and Caribbean Studies Department. Given Canada's material (if understudied) involvement with (and implication in) chattel slavery; the establishment of Black refugee communities within our borders; and our continued direct involvement in the economics and politics of Africa and the Caribbean, it is clear that such a program needs to be prioritized. Furthermore, any new and existing curricular content related to Black, African, and Caribbean studies needs to draw on the well-established insights of critical race theory. Over the last decade, programming that previously enabled critical exploration of blackness has been markedly de-politicized. For example, courses like "Black America in the 20th Century" and "Black History" were cut in the early 2000s and replaced with "Africa and the Slave Trades" and "Migrations in the Atlantic World." Additionally, the removal of Women's Studies as a degree program has meant that various courses that highlighted the experiences of black women (such as "Women's History in Asia and Africa") are no longer available. This erasure of Black realities from the curriculum cannot continue and must be addressed. We are no longer willing to accept courses in which our only option for seeing our realities represented is to try to convince (predominantly white) instructors (who control our grades) to allow us to pursue topics outside the syllabus with "special permission" (University of Guelph demands).

The historical record for most colleges and universities remains one marked by slavery, exploitation, and exclusion. Colleges in North America are founded on legacies of white supremacy and white racism. Students at the University of Toronto and the University of

Guelph provide a real analysis of their colleges and bring forth the atrocities that are often ignored, forgotten, and kept hidden.

The last part of this section focuses on developing competency training programs for faculty, staff, and administrators. Behind the calls for cultural sensitivity are attempts to inform white people about racial discrimination, microaggressions, and enacting colorblind ideologies. Students from the University of Baltimore point that cultural competency training include "workshops, lectures, and interactive courses." There are a variety of ways that re-training can be implemented. SOC from the University of Baltimore and Providence College ultimate want respect, humanity, inclusiveness, and recognition. These are hardly radically ideas; the fact that students continue to call for decency and respect in this day and age goes to show the lack of racial progress and the work that lies ahead to create true diversity and equality. The People of Color Coalition from the University of Baltimore essentially want a better campus environment:

> This university is increasingly becoming a multicultural environment… This university has a problem with faculty being insensitive to students of color and promoting instances of outright discrimination and microaggressions. There is a responsibility for this university to create positive environments of learning and form effective working relationships amongst all in this community. Cultural competency training should be given on a semester basis (this includes workshops, lectures, and interactive courses) and be mandatory for students, faculty, and staff. We also demand that faculty members are put through intensive training on how to implement culturally relevant teaching techniques and curricula that breeds an environment of inclusiveness and understanding in the classroom (University of Baltimore demands by the People of Color Coalition).

SOC at Providence College also require faculty and staff to participate in programs that address and investigate acceptance, self-awareness, differences, culture, and adaptability.

Their detailed list of demands specifically about training and educational programs not only serves as an example of the serious racial problems across campuses but sheds light on the institutional practices that continue to target people of color. Student activists at Providence College offer a flexible, sensitive, all-encompassing, and thought-out plan of action:

> 1. A culturally competent educator, who is simultaneously self-aware of their culture and that of others and will use these differences to advance the service of teaching and learning… Also acknowledging differences allows for a deeper and more nuanced understanding of similarities. When one acknowledges cultural differences it allows for the broadening of perspectives that neither require sympathy or judgment, this then fosters an environment wherein which differences are not just accepted or tolerated, but valued for what their contribution to the Providence College community.
> 2. Self-awareness implicates the varied ways culture impacts human behavior. In becoming self-aware one is conscious of where their cultural limits are and are likely to be pushed. This leads to predicting potential areas of conflict and then accommodating them when needed.
> 3. Dynamic difference involves understanding that people of different cultures may at some point come into conflict either from misinterpreting or misjudging in cross-cultural communication; then knowing how to right the wrong that has been done. If educators, students, and faculty are prepared for cross- cultural miscommunication, they will be better inclined to respond to such incidents with respect and understanding.
> 4. Motivating students and promoting academic successes by considering what it might mean in the context of the students cultural group, is a solution that can prevent many cultural incompetent mistakes in the classroom. This allows for teachers to have resources that enables them to refer to cultural norms they may not always need to use or have access to. Knowing your students promotes concern and positive relationships that create a better educational environment. This means not ignoring students' cultural backgrounds such as the concept of being "colorblind" which in fact strips students of their unique cultural background.
> 5. Adapting and adjusting teaching practices that have their roots in the dominant cultural paradigm to accommodate cultural differences. This allows for educational goals to be better suited for many students and their cultural backgrounds (Providence College demands).

Detailed plans from student groups at schools like Providence College provide a blueprint for colleges and universities to implement training and educational programs. Tweaks to existing curriculum or establishing new courses would create a more conducive environment for SOC. Not only would SOC learn about their histories, culture, and realities but white students could also gain better understandings of people of color as well as their own privileges. Reiterating the student demands, courses on race and racism should be mandatory for first-year incoming college students. These seminars need to include racial awareness literature rather than material that simply focuses on cultural awareness, tolerance, and multiculturalism. Racially relevant courses such as anti-racist seminars challenge existing white power structures and heteronormative standards. Reconfiguring and restructuring present degree requirements will ensure that students must take courses that discuss racial differences, true histories, and pathways to overcome racism and sexism.

This work cannot be done without supporting and creating African American, Chican@ Studies, Latin@ Studies, and Women and Gender Studies departments. Hiring motivated, well-trained faculty and staff members will also best serve the needs of the students. Ethnic Studies departments must also be supported by their colleges (e.g. liberal arts, humanities, and social science) deans, and top-level administrators in order to succeed. All phases of the hierarchy must be invested into the future success of students, employees, and the community. Training programs and educational projects are essential for enlightening individuals and groups of people either uninformed or misinformed about systems of oppression or the conditions of people of color.

Furthermore, Hiring practices, funding, undergraduate and graduate programs and curriculum, and training programs require substantial coordination and teamwork. Given the current state of affairs on colleges and universities in the U.S. sincere efforts motivated by truth, equality, and justice must be enacted in order to counter a culture of exclusion in higher education.

Campus Life: Space and Place

As I emphasized in my theoretical introduction, space remains an important part of student and campus life, for the social and physical environment can negatively or positively impact a student's performance. Students of color regularly worry about affordable housing, spaces on-campus, and safety. Oftentimes these concerns overlap and create problems for students attending institutions of higher learning. Spaces designated for what are popularly known as multicultural departments or centers are increasingly common on U.S. campuses. Although the effectiveness and the idea of a type of appeasement with regards to multicultural centers may be up for debate, multicultural departments and centers do provide students with a sense of inclusion and often provide spaces to engage with other staff members and students. Safety from racism, nativism, homophobia, and other forms of oppression are often cited by SOC as reasons for creating spaces of their own. For example, Clemson University, Iowa State University, and Simmons College student activists specifically demand multicultural centers on their campuses:

> We want the construction of a multi-cultural center, a safe space for students from underrepresented groups (Clemson University demands by See The Stripes).

> As the number of students of color enrolled at Iowa State increases, there an increasing need for resources and safe spaces. We demand the creation of larger Multicultural Center on ISU's central campus. This will be a place where students of color feel comfortable expressing themselves or their culture. Neither El Centro nor the Current Multicultural center do enough to empower the current student population, and the recent proposals to extend those spaces are not sufficient to fulfill the needs of students (Iowa State University demands by LUCHA).
>
> We demand a Multicultural Student Office in the Student Activities Center on the Academic Campus, as a safe community space where we as students of color can gather and support each other. As part of this initiative we demand that there be increased staff to support the Assistant Provost to Diversity and Inclusion (Simmons College demands by the students of color at Simmons College).

Counterspaces on white institutions of higher education are critical to the health, safety, and inclusion of SOC. Traditional white colleges and universities are overwhelming white spaces that often neglect the spatial needs of Latinx and other students of color. Therefore, student activists of color bring much needed attention to the university/college spatial failing. For instance, funding for multicultural centers were also points of emphasis for student activists. New York University and Southern Methodist University students demand additional monies to construct and/or expand multicultural centers:

> Increased funding for the Center for Multicultural Education and Programs and the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis; temporary creation of a specific lounge designated for Students of Color within Kimmel Center that would be reservable for our organizations. a. Within the NYU 2031 Plan, have guaranteed that an entire floor of the mixed use building in the Southern Superblock plan be entirely dedicated to Students of Color, and another for Queer Students on campus (New York University demands by Students of Color of New York University).
>
> SMU will allocate new financial resources towards the expansion of the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs into a Multicultural Center (Southern Methodist University demands).

Although multicultural centers provide spaces for POC, anti-racism or economic development centers would directly address issues stemming from systemic racism. Black students from Kennesaw State University not only demand an anti-racism center but simultaneously challenge the university's racist origins and continued racism:

> We demand a commitment to funds for an anti-racist education center, which was promised in 2010 by the President's Blue Ribbon Commission, on the Bartow County land. The land in Bartow County, which was gifted to Kennesaw State University, is the land previously owned by the family of Corra Harris - the woman who in 1899 published a horrendous and widely popular defense of the lynching of Sam Hose- and the university still has not turned the land into a positive space for anti-racist rhetoric or action. Why does our university own this land, one that honors the life of an extremely violently racist woman who was praised for defending the lynching of people of color? What is our university doing to make effective, positive change to this land? (Kennesaw State University demands by Black students at Kennesaw State University).

A room or center specific to racial identity reinforces student's backgrounds and allows them to express themselves. Black students reiterate the need for a safe space:

> We demand a Black Cultural Space on Portland State University Campus by Fall Term 2016, where students can feel safe, accepted, supported and like they belong (Portland State University demands by Portland State BSU).

> We demand a 25 percent increase in both the budget of the Africana Center and an increase in Black student agency in determining the operation of the Africana Center (Tufts University demands by #TheThreePercent).

> We demand support and funding for an Afro Room. We would like to provide a safe space for African American students that would be operated and ran by the Black Student Government (California State University, East Bay demands by #BlackAtTheBay).

Formal locations on campus send POC a signal that they are valued and important members of the college/university community. Creation of new student

centers, rooms, and increased budgets will provide students the necessary space to freely express themselves.

Furthermore, housing has an even more direct impact on the academic experiences of students of color. The living quarters for students of color are essential to their everyday experiences and academic success. Student activists demand living arrangements that are gender neutral and relegated for SOC. Competent housing student activists from California State University Los Angeles and San Luis Obispo ask for specific housing justified by affordability and providing a safe and comfortable place to live:

> WE DEMAND the creation and financial support of a CSLA housing space delegated for Black students and a full time Resident Director who can cater to the needs of Black students. Many Black CSLA students cannot afford to live in Alhambra or the surrounding area with the high prices of rent. A CSLA housing space delegated for Black students would provide a cheaper alternative housing solution for Black students. This space would also serve as a safe space for Black CSLA students to congregate, connect, and learn from each other (California State University, Los Angeles demands by CSLA Black Student Union).

> A. We demand overhauled diversity and inclusivity training for CA/RA's. B. We demand gender neutral or co-gender housing options for any student living on campus in locations other than PCV or Cerro Vista. C. We demand that first year residence halls provide a comparable level of gender-neutral facilities to gendered facilities, in restroom facilities and living arrangements (California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo demands by SLO Solidarity).

Housing that acknowledges race and gender will help foster a campus that caters to the needs of students and recognizes and embraces their differences. In addition, accounting for language considers cultural background and recognizes multiple language speakers.

Along with housing for SOC, students at Dartmouth College demanded reserved housing spaces based on language:

> Establish Japanese Language affinity housing, Korean Language affinity housing, and Hindi-Urdu Language affinity housing. Currently, the only AMELL language program housing arrangements are in Arabic and Chinese (Dartmouth College demands by the Concerned Asian, Black, Latin@, Native, Undocumented, Queer, and Differently-Abled students at Dartmouth College).

Creating comfortable and conducive spaces for dialogue, learning, and living are vital to the well-being of SOC. Co-neutral bathrooms are also a point of emphasizes for student activists:

> Both gender-specific and gender-neutral bathrooms need to be available in every residential building on campus (Dartmouth College demands by the Concerned Asian, Black, Latin@, Native, Undocumented, Queer, and Differently-Abled students at Dartmouth College).
>
> We demand the installation of gender-neutral bathrooms in every building on campus (University of San Diego demands by Concerned Students at USD).
>
> We demand that our university provide gender neutral housing and restrooms that are accessible and convenient. We call for our university to create a streamlined process for changing gender markers and names within university databases and records. We require that university personnel use personal gender pronouns as indicated by the individual (University of South Carolina demands by USC 2020 Vision).

Affordable, accessible, and non-discriminatory housing will provide SOC the necessary space conducive for living and learning. Students of color from less privileged socioeconomic backgrounds will have the opportunity to live near or on campus and become an essential part of the college/university community. The ideal of gender neutral housing and restrooms are long overdue and challenge preconceived and outdated ideas about gender roles. Eliminating gender restrictions would make

individuals that identify as asexual, intersexed, and transgender feel included in student life.

The call for space entails a discussion about symbolic and physical spaces, including concerns regarding safety. It also means a conversation about the reality of physical safety among students of color. The 2015-2016 student protest movement originates from community violence, specifically police violence and the murders of young Black and Brown men and women. Campus police departments are not exempt from the same repressive tactics employed by city police departments. Oversight of campus police and gun control are serious issues that impact the lives of people of color. SOC from Portland State University, Tufts University, and the University of Kansas call for oversight and safer conditions on their campuses:

> We demand for the disarmament of all Campus Public Safety officers on the campus of Portland State University (Portland State University demands by Portland State BSU).
>
> We demand an end to increased surveillance of predominantly black events by Tufts University Police Department (Tufts University demands by #TheThreePercent).
>
> Ban concealed weapons from campus (Under Kansas law, concealed weapons must be allowed on public university campuses beginning in July 2017. The Kansas Board of Regents currently is seeking input from KU and other universities to develop a policy covering how the new law will be implemented) (University of Kansas demands by Rock Chalk Invisible Halk).

Racial minorities are disproportionately arrested, face longer sentences, and are subject to racial profiling. The over-policing of SOC is a real concern that makes students feel unsafe, unwanted, and restricted. Thus campus police can make the campus environment the opposite of their intended purpose – unsafe, intimidating, and uncomfortable for

students of color. Campus police have the capacity to keep students safe. One way to accomplish this task is to restrict guns on campuses. Some state legislators in Texas, Colorado, and other states in the U.S. have allowed students and employees to carry concealed firearms on campus. Access to guns, white anxiety, and white male anger make the campus environment intimidating and at times frightening for students of color. The presence of guns reinforces the fear that SOC have as they attend overwhelmingly white colleges and universities.

If universities and colleges can create traditions, mascots, and other affiliations, then anti-racism work and racist free paraphernalia can also be created. Taking down items with clear racist pasts and renaming objects and buildings with white racist names can create a more hate-free environment on-campus. For example, Harvard Law School students requested that the university recognize their racist past and change racist décor:

> Address Harvard Law School's legacy of slavery by removing the Royall family crest from Harvard Law School's official seal and creating a permanent physical memorialization of the enslaved victims of the Royall family.
> Remove the Royall family crest from the HLS seal.
> Change the "Isaac Royall Chair" by renaming the chair to the "Belinda Royall Chair" or allocating the chair to a Critical Race Theory scholar (Harvard University demands by Harvard Law Students).

Harvard law students of color also asked for a monument that pays homage to anti-racism and discusses the universities ugly racial history:

> Create a permanent physical acknowledgment (such as a monument on campus) of this institution's legacy of slavery, memorializing those who were brutalized by the Royall family, and describing the change of the seal and the Royall chair (Harvard University demands by Harvard Law Students).

Similar to SOC at Harvard, student activists at Yale University suggest changing their residential college "Calhoun" to the name of a person of color (Yale University demands). The names of slave masters and slavery sympathizers are present on campuses and continue to impact campus life. White enslavement of Africans and the legacy of slavery are thus permanent fixtures on contemporary colleges and universities throughout the Americas. Numerous colleges have similar racial backgrounds are intertwined with the brutal and bloody institution of slavery. Colleges and universities in the South and North were often built on the backs of slave labor and Africans and native born Blacks were exploited as they literally constructed the foundation for white intellectuals to profess morals and ethics. SOC at the University of Alabama and the University of Oregon understand this complex racial history and explicitly target the Ku Klux Klan and the visibility of this hate group on their respective campuses:

> Remove the names of white supremacists, klansmen, confederate generals, and eugenicists from classroom buildings or include a visual marker to indicate the history of racism that the building's namesake was associated with (University of Alabama demands by #wearedone).

> Change the names of all of the KKK related buildings on campus. DEADY Hall will be the first building to be renamed. a. We cannot and should not be subjugated to walk in any buildings that have been named after people that have vehemently worked against the Black plight, and plight of everyone working to achieve an equitable society. b. Allowing buildings to be named after members who support these views is in direct conflict with the university's goal keep black students safe on campus (University of Oregon demands by OU Black Student Task Force).

The influence of Ku Klux Klan members and sympathizers is present on U.S. campuses and has become normalized at some universities and colleges. Whites and people of color have knowingly and unknowingly celebrated white supremacy. Operating out of

the white racial frame (Feagin, 2013) whites tend to overlook these acts of violence as taking place in the past and believe they have no connection to on-going forms of racial oppression. The presence of the KKK-connected institutions of higher learning create environments that are hostile, unwelcoming, and frankly violent to students of color.

In order to challenge spaces of hostility, student activists of color, utilizing their home frames and counter-frames, resist white space and offer alternatives to white hegemonic practices. Campuses that are exclusively white in particular can be suffocating places for SOC, and many colleges and universities could make strides in fostering positive race relations by changing the physical space and social milieu of their campuses. In place of oppressive reminders of white supremacy, students of color also call for artwork that reflects their racial background:

> Decorating spaces (art, murals, etc.) that reflect the various identities on our campus (Grinnell College demands by the Multicultural Leadership Council).
>
> Mutually agreed upon commissioned artwork (St. Louis University demands by #OccupySLU).
>
> Build a monument designed by a Native artist on Cross Campus acknowledging that Yale University was founded on stolen indigenous land (Yale University demands)

Artwork, murals, monuments, and statues that represent SOC pay tribute to the student population and recognize people of color who have contributed to academics, society, and the college/university. Art invokes an emotional response that can add to the comfort or discomfort for SOC. This is critical especially in colleges and universities that are predominantly white and tend to foster isolation for students of color. Artwork also provides students with a sense of ownership and acceptance that can make them feel

as if they belong to the school rather than as tokens, affirmative action recipients, or simply tolerated.

Housing, multicultural centers, anti-racism centers, gender neutral bathrooms, campus safety, and adding culturally relevant artwork are issues that universities and colleges can improve upon in order to create a safe, welcoming, and favorable campus environment. Perhaps equal and affordable housing has the biggest impact, along with on-campus spaces and centers, on student development and day-to-day experiences. Spaces to relax, socialize, converse, and be accepted positively influence the everyday lived realities for SOC. Although students of color may frequent on-campus spaces, they need housing that is safe, affordable, and nice. College and university housing would benefit from administrators, city officials, and policies that have students interest at heart rather than profit making or other concerns besides housing. The ways we think about space on and off campus require new approaches and views about safety, racial and gender differences, and symbolic representations of racism.

Solutions and Training: Programs and Cultural Awareness

The last section presents and analyzes student solutions to the problems outlined in their list of demands. There are several categories such as health that should be considered in-depth but will be covered here briefly before a lengthy discussion of the three following sections: (1) programs (2) training, and (3) culture. The psychological needs of people of color are often overlooked and carry stigmas within communities of color, access to mental health professionals is another concern. Some of the health concerns student activists discussed within their list of demands covered: reduce wait

times, hiring mental health professionals of color, diet, physical and emotional health, employee health care benefits, trauma specialists, and racial microaggressions. Students of color are exposed to "extremely hostile environments" which impacts their psychological state. Graduate students, in particular, are susceptible to mental issues due to increased stress (Brown University demands by Concerned Graduate Students of Color). Hiring staff of color that have experience with anxiety, depression, stress, and specific racial and ethnic ailments that disproportionally affect students of color, is necessary for students at predominantly white institutions.

Student of color retention rates have also been one arena where administrators could improve outcomes. Simply admitting more qualified students of color, hiring faculty and staff of color, and creating scholarships and outreach programs that target SOC, will increase retention and graduation rates. Increasing acceptance rates for students of color will require a restructuring of the financial aid packages colleges and universities offer, particularly for undocumented students. Making college affordable and accessible for undocumented students will in turn act as a recruiting tool for other underprivileged students of color. Again, funding is an important key to help colleges and universities attract SOC. Therefore, programs centered on racial diversity offer services and resources in order to recruit and retain students of color.

Another possible solution students of color offered were newly appointed positions that work to eliminate racial oppression. These positions on campus varied in title, power, and concentration; however, potential employees would act as intermediaries between administrators and students. Some of the descriptors of such on-

campus roles include: advocate, adviser, leader, and liaison. These positions are also imposed to keep administrators honest and accountable for their decisions and actions. As a result, student activists have requested diversity posts that are focused on inclusion, transparency, injustice, retention rates, positive and open hierarchy relationships, pedagogy, and programming. The next section further expands on sustainable anti-racist programs, workshops, and education forums.

Student activists demanded greater transparency from their colleges and universities. SOC suggested numerous ways for colleges to be more visible and transparent such as campus climate surveys, external/internal oversight (e.g. advisory boards), hiring accountability (e.g. increasing employees of color), open communication, hate crime policies (judicial process), forums, and public reporting and training (i.e. community partnerships). Furthermore, they suggest funding assessments conducted by an outside task force; for example a "Bias Response Team" given the responsibility to review operating procedures at the department, administrative, and college/university level. For instance, increases in tuition and student fees require justification when administrator salaries continue to rise. In addition, proper protocols for sexual harassment and hate speech including infractions and punishment need to be explicit and carried out. Anti-discrimination policies to hold people that conduct racist acts of hate accountable also need to be on the books and perpetrators need to be disciplined or removed from the college or university. The following three sections highlight the most relevant student demands: programs, training, and culture.

Programs

Racism has remained a prominent fixture on college campuses and is the greatest problem facing colleges and universities in the U.S. Yet, programs focused on educating students, staff, and administrators about the ill-effects of white racial oppression are key to fighting against injustice and discrimination. Students of color have called for and devised numerous programs centered on reducing and eventually eliminating inequalities in higher education. The solutions that students pose below are vital to turning around the hegemonic white discourse that plague most institutions such as deficiency models about people of color's intellect, misunderstandings about their experiences, and SOC as undeserving. As a result, students have demanded programming for mentoring, raising awareness, sexual assault prevention, racial discrimination, and educational workshops.

Students of color advocate for workshops designed for greater cultural understanding, inclusivity, and personal development, which are particularly instrumental to first-year undergraduate's understanding about racial bias and oppression. Students of color from Bard College, Brandeis University, and Sarah Lawrence College support racially conscious workshops for faculty, administrators, and students:

> Bard College must support and ensure the establishment and provision of Diversity and Sensitivity Workshops multiple times a semester to faculty and staff at all levels. These workshops will provide continuous in-person training regarding cultural understanding, engagement with bias, the use of inclusive language, etc. (Bard College demands).

> Mandate yearly diversity and inclusion workshops for all faculty and staff with optional workshops being offered consistently throughout the academic year. Increase the number of professional development

> workshops specifically tailored for Black students (Brandeis University demands).
>
> We demand that Sarah Lawrence provide more structure through workshops and education initiatives for first year students and transfers to aid in their transition into this college. This is necessary because the College does not accurately reflect the diversity of the US. We demand that the College provide sustained and ongoing faculty and staff training around racism (Sarah Lawrence College demands).

Student activists outline programs that create additional opportunities for student success through training modules and programs designed to talk about race, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender. However, the training programs demanded by SOC must go beyond the traditional online videos, workshops, and educational symposiums. Although students are certainly at the focus of campus-wide programming, as SOC at Claremont McKenna College demand, faculty and staff are also targeted for anti-racist programs:

> Yearly sensitivity trainings available to students, faculty, and staff on what qualifies as Islamophobia and the harms of it. Muslim students have reported feeling stereotyped, isolated, and invalidated by their peers (Claremont McKenna College demands).

Efforts to de-racialize the campus environment include training for staff and faculty. Students of color often face racial animosity from their peers as well as faculty and staff members. Beloit College, California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo, and Claremont McKenna College students recount some of the racism they have experienced while demanding racially sensitive training sessions:

> Recurring Diversity sensitivity Training for faculty and staff to promote better inclusivity for students of color in classroom, office, and administrative spaces. a. Department Heads, senior staff, administrators need to participate in at least two semesters of the faculty/staff Sustained Dialogue group. b. Critically using end-of-year evaluations and suggested reporting system to recommend/require participation in faculty/staff SD groups or other sensitivity training (Beloit College demands).

> Orientation A. We demand diversity and inclusivity programming, education, and topic areas throughout Soar and the Week of Welcome, including an awareness program specifically covering diversity. B. We demand orientation social events centered around underrepresented groups. C. We demand mandatory online cultural sensitivity training for new students before coming to Cal Poly in addition to all of this, so students are thinking of these issues before they even arrive (California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo demands by SLO Solidarity).
>
> Mandatory and periodic racial sensitivity trainings for all professors. The majority of the 20 students at the first social recalled instances in which professors made racially insensitive remarks, asked students to represent their race in class, or repeatedly mistook students for other students of color in the class (Claremont McKenna College demands).

The aforementioned programs specifically target white staff and faculty members whereas the following programs are designed to benefit the entire campus community. Issues concerning racial recognition, intersectionality, funding, and sexual harassment are championed by SOC from Grinnell College and Lewis and Clark College. Programs designed to enhance college life are articulated below:

> Programming around knowing your rights when faced with discrimination
> Raising awareness around contemporary issues of Indigenous Peoples
> Portion of the Innovation Fund dedicated to projects focused on Diversity and Inclusion
> Student Advisors in the Residence Halls expanding their programming to include diversity and inclusion dialogue
> Bringing in more speakers of color through the Rosenfield, Wilson, Departmental programs (also curricular)
> Continuing to raise awareness on Title IX, Race-Related issues, individually and their intersectionality
> Provide funding for opportunities to connect to schools, regional and national organizations who are involved in diversity and inclusion work full-time
> Establishing an intercultural alumni weekend so that current students can network with underrepresented alumni (Grinnell College demands by the Multicultural Leadership Council).
> 1. The Buddy System has been up since Saturday, November 21st,

> created in response to the violent attacks that occurred earlier that morning. It shall be incorporated into a substantial support service that is always available to students of Color and the community.
> 2. Create ten work study positions for Sexual Assault Response Advocate (SARA) trained students and fill these through an affirmative action process that emphasizes hiring students of color (Lewis and Clark College demands).

Orientation and mentoring programs for first-year students are helpful to expose students to ideas about racial equality, especially for white students who have limited experience with people of color. SOC at the University of San Diego, Claremont McKenna College, and Grinnell College call for such action:

> We demand the creation of a comprehensive orientation on racial, gender, and queer inclusion and diversity, mandatory to students, staff, faculty and administration and maintained by a board comprised of students, staff and faculty from diverse, less privileged backgrounds (University of San Diego demands by Concerned Students at USD).
>
> A mentoring program for first year students of color (Claremont McKenna College demands).
>
> Expanding diversity and inclusion programs during and beyond New Student Orientation for all students.
> Developing a focused mentoring program for alumni and students (Grinnell College demands by the Multicultural Leadership Council).

The logic behind first-year and orientation programs is that the problems associated with racial oppression will be minimalized if white students learn right from wrong in the beginning of their academic careers. The problem remains societal in nature. No matter how racially free a campus appears students continue to live in a highly racialized social system designed to privilege whites and exploit people of color. Student support in the form of academic, financial, and networking programs begins to break down some of racist practices at the institution and ultimately society. Beloit

College students of color provide several points to help boost student support programming:

> a. Bridge programs for students of color who don't qualify for TRIO. b. Create more opportunities, or make opportunities more accessible, for undocumented students who do not qualify for SSS/Trio, Federal grants and loans, McNair, or even varsity Sports, without a social security number. c. Academic networking and community support for Students of color. d. Beginning of semester orientations where students of color can meet other students, faculty, and staff of color (Beloit College demands).

Racial microaggressions are particularly damaging to people of color because they often go unreported, go unrecorded, and become normalized in white institutional settings. People of color endure racist ideologies, discrimination, and mistreatment by white students, faculty, and staff on a daily basis. Yet, students of color are often blamed when they react to racial hostilities, and these responses are often internalized and impact student performance. The programs represented above indicate that racism not only takes place but students of color are actively fighting against it. The University of San Francisco Black Student Union group sums up the concerns and demands of SOC well:

> Addressing racial microaggressions with a two pronged approach that is (1) proactive in educating all white campus constituents about their racial identity and privilege, (2) reactive and reformative in documenting racial and other microaggressions and providing consequences and required professional development. a. We demand an institutional resource commitment to these plans/efforts and that they must be approved and/or overseen by the Cultural Center (CC) or Office of Diversity Engagement Community Outreach (DECO) who have both demonstrated a commitment to our success in actionable terms. Toward this end we demand to see allocated institutional resources within the action plan deadline (University of San Francisco demands by USF Black Student Union).

Programs are only effective if they are implemented regularly, professionally, and with an emphasis on changing campus culture. College and university officials need to prioritize anti-racism programs and make a commitment to altering their usual forms of discussing and challenging racial oppression. Black students from the University of San Francisco provide a succinct and well-argued approach to countering racial microagressions by developing concentrated oversight on acts of racism. The next section describes not just programming and workshops but training activities and methods for instilling helpful cultural, racial, and gendered practices.

Training

Similar to the implementation of programs, the call for training are also meant to compensate for racism on-campus. Students of color across the U.S. continue to request additional training on issues pertaining to diversity, racial awareness, and sensitivity. One way to counter oppression is to create anti-racist and anti-oppressive training modules for students, staff, and faculty. Training refers to a rigorous set of expectations that participants must master in order to build up to the next step in the program. Training sessions are designed to give participants knowledge about how to avoid unintentional harm and avoid assumptions about people of color. Adding new educational training will help serve this purpose: "ongoing and regular diversity and inclusion training for staff, faculty, and students that address the curricular and co-curricular experience" (Grinnell College demands by the Multicultural Leadership Council). The goals of training are explained by students from Providence College:

> To be aware of one's own culturally- based assumptions, values, and biases. To understand the worldview of students who are culturally

> different from one's self. To use effective instructional practices, Intervention strategies, and techniques (Providence College demands).

In addition, students from Harvard University and Grinnell College provide exact details and even give explicit instructions for learning activities to facilitate growth and effectiveness:

> We demand that HSPH address race and inequity through education by instituting mandatory training on race and privilege for all students, post-docs, staff, and faculty, developing case studies that challenge social injustice, and increasing practicum opportunities on themes of racism and health. This process should begin by the spring semester and incorporate student input (Harvard University).

> Fall and Spring semester diversity and inclusion training for student leaders and student groups that includes how to have hard conversations, implicit bias, microaggressions, privilege, and power (Grinnell College demands by the Multicultural Leadership Council).

Furthermore, student activists of color demand everyone take awareness training on race and ethnicity, culture, racial sensitivity, and racial competence. Unlike the previous passages focused on specifically training faculty, staff, and students, the next set of quotes highlight the universal call for anti-racism training. The following statements were organized based on their call to include everyone affiliated with the students' respective universities:

> BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the University of Southern California implement mandatory, yearly, in-person diversity and cultural competency trainings led by cultural resource centers for student leaders on campus, including but not limited to all student government (Undergraduate Student Government, Graduate Student Government, Residential Student Government, etc.), Greek Councils, and all university-recognized student groups (University of Southern California demands by USC Undergraduate Student Government).

> We also demand Critical Racial Sensitivity training to be REQUIRED for ALL-which includes but is not limited to faculty, staff, student leaders

> and administrative members immediately (Webster University demands by the Association for African American Collegians).
>
> The development of racial competence and respect training and accountability systems for all Yale affiliates (Yale University demands).

No one is exempt from cultural and racial competency training, and whites especially would benefit from conversations and dialogue concerning racism and white privilege. The fact that SOC state that everyone needs training rather than specific groups shows the seriousness and importance of racial training; racial education needs to be consistent and on-going. Anti-violence training is another area of concern for SOC:

> We demand an in-person and compulsory Title IX training for faculty, staff, DPS, administrators, and students that includes an intersectional framework. The current non-compulsory online Title IX training module is ineffective and does not address the structural racism, queerphobia, economic violence and transphobia that is foundational to sexual violence on campus. Women of color—particularly Black, Brown and racial minority trans* people—are at the highest risk for sexual assault on college campuses, yet the debate over Title IX has thus far been framed as predominantly White. Statistics from across North America show that women of color, and especially trans* women of color, are at a higher risk for sexual assault than their white counterparts on college campuses and beyond (Brown University demands by Concerned Graduate Students of Color).

Faculty and staff need sexual assault training as well as racial justice training. Considering that people of color are significantly at risk for sexual assault, specific training to help transgender people of color may provide resources to deal with physical and emotional trauma. Student activists directly pointed out the need for equity training targeting professors, staff members, and administrators (University of Ottawa demands). Furthermore, Clemson University students suggest that incentivized diversity training will encourage professors and administrators to participate (Clemson University

demands by See The Stripes). Students at Simmons College reiterate similar notions of incentives:

> We demand that all faculty and staff be put through rigorous diversity training that emphasizes the requirement that they address microagressions and misinformation in class. As part of this we also demand that faculty are incentivized to participate in racial justice work as part of the tenure and promotion processes (Simmons College demands by the Students of Color at Simmons College).

Incentives could provide staff and faculty members the extra motivation to attend and participate in anti-racist training programs, classes, and workshops. Students from the University of Oregon suggest bringing in a Black professor from outside the university to discuss racism on-campus (University of Oregon demands by OU Black Student Task Force). Many colleges and universities have demanded mandatory racial awareness training sessions for faculty, staff, and administrators. The following list highlights the immediate need for faculty and staff training regarding race, racism, and racial oppression:

> Mandatory racial sensitivity training for all incoming employees, faculty of San Francisco State University including UPD (San Francisco State University demands by SFSU BSU).
>
> We demand that all faculty and staff, especially those who engage students on a regular basis, participate in a mandatory diversity training provided by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. This training should be intersectional and representative of a wide variety of identity groups (University of South Carolina demands by USC 2020 Vision).
>
> Establish mandatory equity training for all faculty, students, governors, and all other administrative bodies. This entails mandatory anti-oppression training for all persons employed by the University, and an equity breadth requirement for all students (University of Toronto demands).

> Establish mandatory anti-oppression and equity training for all students, faculty, staff, and administration. The university has come to understand the importance of addressing social issues as a means of creating inclusive and safe communities. As seen through the "Can I Kiss You?" programming during orientation week and the campus-wide effort to implement training in relation to mental health, there is the capacity to prioritize large scale programming on anti-oppression (University of Guelph demands).
>
> Mandatory, intense "inclusion and belonging" training for all levels of students, staff, faculty, and administration… 4. Train and rehire IOA staff and implement accountability measures (KU's Office of Institutional Opportunity and Access is charged with investigating reports of discrimination on campus — including sexual harassment and sexual violence — and recommending disciplinary action. Director Jane McQueeny resigned in October, and KU currently is searching for a replacement. The office still has four employees (University of Kansas demands by Rock Chalk Invisible Halk).
>
> We demand Mandatory Racial Justice Training for all employees, faculty, staff, and new students. This training must be facilitated by a student-approved third party consultant (Loyola University Maryland demands by Concerned Students of Color at Loyola University Maryland).
>
> Institute mandatory training for all college employees, especially Residential Education, Student Affairs, and Campus Safety, that provides tools to properly assist people from marginalized (Occidental College demands by Oxy United for Black Liberation).
>
> We demand mandated diversity training for all current and incoming faculty members from a reputable training program, such as Diversity Awareness Partnership (St. Louis Christian College demands).

The calls for mandatory training indicate the seriousness surrounding anti-racist training particularly for faculty and staff. Students of color believe faculty and staff should be required to take educational training in racial sensitivity, and clearly their demands are coming from racialized experiences. It is no surprise given society's current racial climate that employees exhibit racist inclinations and perform acts of discrimination. There continue to be widespread inequalities across health, education, housing, politics,

and employment. Required training for staff and faculty employees is a small price to pay for more equality, diversity, and inclusion. Clearly the frequent demands for mandatory training underscore a larger systemic problem correlated with race. The experiences of students of color from the U.S. and Canada provide significant findings that prove problems connected to race plague systems of higher education. Perhaps Black students from Mississippi State University sum up their experiences and the need for training most adequately:

> Diversity and sensitivity training for all faculty and institutionalized diversity and sensitivity learning for Freshman Students. Part of the daily struggles of being an African American student on campus is the daily micro-aggressive and macro-aggressive experiences that we face on campus. This can be mitigated with knowledge and training that encourages sensitivity to students from marginalized backgrounds (Mississippi State University demands by the Coalition of Black Students).

Students of color contend, deal, and endure racism on a daily basis. Training may not eliminate racism but taken in totality with other preventive measures can reduce incidents of white racism and potentially capture a true sense of justice, equality, freedom, and liberty. Concentrated training targeting students, staff, and faculty members must vary in scope, message, and goals. Tailored training sessions are necessary for different groups and different knowledge bases, yet, there is something to be said about comprehensive training that includes all people. Although universities and colleges primarily deal with young people between the ages of 18-22, they live in a world with a much more diverse age range that includes professors and staff members. Therefore, students, staff, and faculty would benefit from attending multiple training regiments and programs. Applying mandatory training workshops can help begin to

change campus culture and make it more beneficial to students of color pursuing a college degree.

Culture

One way to facilitate cultural understandings and racial awareness involves intensive cultural training for college and university community members. Students of color demand that their white counterparts take cultural sensitivity training. Due to on-going racial divisions on U.S. campuses, SOC have called for faculty, staff, administrators, employees, and students to take mandatory cultural competency training. Oftentimes cultural training is combined with other training programs such as anti-racist and anti-discrimination programs. Student activists have also argued for task force groups and online training. The following quotes from SOC highlight their desire for cultural awareness training programs:

> WE demand a mandatory cultural awareness/racial sensitivity training take place for all incoming employees, staff, faculty and the University Police Department at CSUEB (California State University, East Bay demands by #BlackAtTheBay).

> WE DEMAND a CSLA Anti-discrimination policy. Furthermore, we demand that cultural competency training be given to all faculty and staff. It is a shame that discriminatory and racist incidents continue to happen on campus, and those responsible do not face any repercussions. An anti-discrimination policy would outline exactly what discriminatory behavior looks like, and what the consequences are when such policy is violated (California State University, Los Angeles demands by CSLA Black Student Union).

Students of color at Lawrence University and Duke University have also demanded hiring people of color and instituting training programs, overseen by a task force:

> A mandatory cultural sensitivity training for all faculty and staff should be enforced and that must be done at the beginning of every school year

> and at least twice a year. There should be repercussions if this training is not attended.
> A cultural sensitivity training that is relevant to their position should also be given (Lawrence University demands by Students of Color at Lawrence University).
>
> All professors, Student Affairs faculty, and DUPD must participate in cultural competency and implicit bias training overseen by the Task Force on Bias and Hate Issues (Duke University demands by Black Voices).

Michigan State University students also targeted college and university housing and police employees for cultural training:

> We demand that all current and future Residential Advisors and Michigan State University Police receive a mandatory cultural competency training (Michigan State University demands by #liberatemsu).

Housing employees, police officers, and fellow white students are especially in need of cultural training because they live among, have friends, and work with people of color. Campus life remains a concern for students of color, and exclusionary practices are common occurrences. For example, Greek organizations may have very few members of color or none at all, and as a result, white students tend to reproduce white racist ideologies and distorted views of people of color. Bringing attention and demanding that white fraternity and sororities undergo cultural training can help them recognize their role in enabling acts of discrimination, inclinations of prejudice, and racist behavior. There have been countless Greek organizations that have perpetuated racial and gender inequalities on their campuses (Goettsch and Hayes, 1990). Racially themed parties have continued to be a problem for many colleges/universities and continue to marginalize students of color. Racist white-themed parties demonize, stereotype, and reject students of color (Garcia et al., 2011). SOC at Kennesaw State University, Southern Methodist

University, and Duke University make recommendations that interested sorority and fraternity members must adhere to in order to be recognized by the university:

> We demand required cultural awareness, race and ethnicity, and intersectional LGBT diversity training for members of Greek Life and all student organizations on campus. No one should be exempt; student members of Greek Life and staff alike. Staff members are not agents of respectability, nor are organization advisory boards breeding grounds for respectability politics; we will no longer accept the tone policing, political bias, and overarching reach of the power of organization advisors. We must be allowed to fully articulate our diversity on our own terms (Kennesaw State University demands by Black students at Kennesaw State University).

> A cultural intelligence program for all incoming first-year students must be mandatory. Sensitivity training for all faculty and staff, including tenured professors, must be mandatory. No less than one- third of the PRW (Personal Responsibility and Wellness) course curriculum must be dedicated to cultural education. All students considering initiation into any Greek letter organization must go through mandatory cultural intelligence and sensitivity training in order to be eligible (Southern Methodist University demands).

> All members of the Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic Council on Duke's campus must engage in additional bias and diversity training as a part of university policy (Duke University demands by Black Voices).

Finally, effective online training can help the university become a more inclusive and respectful place, e.g. reducing racist themed Greek parties. However, student activists want to supplement online modules with in-person training and spaces for racial dialogue. Students of color at the University of Southern California and the University of Virginia argue for online cultural competency programs and make the case for additional action:

> BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the University of Southern California implement mandatory, recurring online diversity and cultural competency trainings for faculty on campus with an additional mandatory in-person workshop led by cultural resource centers for questions and dialogue

> (University of Southern California demands by USC Undergraduate Student Government).
>
> President Sullivan should order the creation of a mandatory online summer cultural competency training module and a fall orientation presentation. These trainings should include a University-wide online training module on discrimination and micro-aggressions, akin to the alcohol awareness online course, which is mandatory for incoming first years to complete. A similar training module should be created for all incoming faculty. Subsequently, the Vice President for Student Affairs should provide funding for minority groups to develop a mandatory session on race relations on grounds to be held during fall orientation, similar to the discussion on sexual assault held in John Paul Jones Arena. The intent of the module and fall orientation presentation will be to become conscious of behaviors and language that might alienate or isolate other students. Faculty and students should take active roles in developing this module. Resident Advisors should be part of creating these modules. Then, VPSA should require all HRL staff, including professional staff, to both take safe space training and undergo training on facilitating conversations about race, gender, and sexuality. Third, RAs should host discussions on the racial history of U.Va. and Charlottesville. Should a situation arise, students should feel comfortable going to their RA (University of Virginia demands by the Black Student Alliance).

Cultural sensitivity and cultural competency training are intended to correct racist behavior and eliminate future acts of discrimination. Students of color outline specific ways to address microagressions that center on language, ethnicity, food, music, and other cultural identifiers. The white racial framing of people of color and their culture are often viewed as foreign and therefore undesirable except for consumption purposes. White fraternities and sororities have been culprits in propagating racist cultural symbols. Residential advisors and police members would also benefit from cultural training because they live together with, police, and work with students of color. Countering racism on-campus through cultural relevant training and understandings of people of color will help reduce white racist antagonism. Whites should consider the

suggestions and valuable insights by students of color in order to eliminate racial oppression and create a harmonious campus environment.

Conclusion

Over the past years the student protest movement has garnered substantial attention from the media, community members, politicians, and college officials. The previous two chapters revealed the racialized campus experiences of Latina/o/x undergraduate students. Together students of color, primarily from Black and Latinx backgrounds, stood up to white administrators and demanded accountability and action against racism on-campus from everything to curriculum to the physical space. This chapter provided many examples of students of color applying their counter-frames to overt and covert forms of racism on their college and university campuses. Student activists directly challenged the systemic racism, normativity of whiteness, their school administrators, and the very essence of higher education itself. SOC demanded wide spread institutional change, and taken as a whole, outlined areas of concern and contestation. This chapter focused on four distinct areas of change and discussion: faculty, curriculum, space, and solutions.

Increasing faculty, staff, and administrators of color was an important point of emphasis for the majority of student activists. SOC demanded additional professors that were committed to racial equality and exemplified racially conscious understandings of society. Faculty, staff, and administrators from underrepresented minority groups provide insights into the lived conditions of SOC and can offer solutions, support, and advice. Also, the fact that college employees of color are role models often gets

overlooked. The power of seeing someone from your own racial and ethnic backgrounds can give students pride, self-assurance, and a vision for the future. Incorporating additional people of color in higher education will enrich the institution in terms of knowledge, culture, equality, learning, diversity, and success. People of color will raise the profile of the college/university not damage the reputation, and over time, students of color will be admitted in greater numbers, therefore employees of color are seriously needed to help these students attain a higher degree of education for the sake of our society and country.

Critical curriculum examining all forms of oppression and exploitation, including imperialism, colonialism, capitalism, and patriarchy, are often missing from college and university classrooms. Issues pertaining to race, racism, and racial oppression are not emphasized at most colleges, so the need remains; and as a results individuals are ill-prepared for the real world and end reproducing racism. Restructuring graduation requirements and implementing anti-racist courses and programs will facilitate equality and acceptance. Obviously white students will benefit from mandatory curriculum focused on deconstructing and exposing racial oppression. White students will be given the critical thinking skills necessary to assess their white privilege and their role in sustaining white supremacy. Substantial changes in curriculum enhance the knowledge base of SOC and give white students the tools needed to be an ally in the fight against racial oppression.

The findings from this chapter reiterate the need for space and the importance of safe comfortable campus environments. SOC also demanded affordable and equal access

to housing. Living on-campus or even living near campus can make students of color feel part of campus life and positively impact their outlook and connection to the college. Ultimately, appropriate artwork and non-racist surroundings (i.e. building names), make SOC feel accepted, unafraid, and confident. The importance of spaces of expression are critical for marginalized students that identify as racial minorities and LGBTQIA. Whites would do well to learn from students of color when it comes to rearranging, creating, and making places on-campus advantageous for learning and growing. Safety remains at the top of the list for SOC, routinely facing white hostility; as a result space becomes a battleground for racial inclusion/exclusion. Transforming campus space shows students of color and the community that the college/university is committed to racial equality.

Lastly, these underrepresented students provided concise, direct, and detailed solutions to fight against systemic forms of racism and sexism. Students of color have responded to threats based on race, color, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other characteristics by calling out systemic racism and those that operate out of the white racial frame. The student activists have offered sharp critiques of higher education and numerous ways to improve campus life. White powerholders need to take heed of the student demands and relate some of their decision making responsibilities to communities of color. Furthermore, schools need to provide statistics and discussions on the push-out and retention rates for students of color. Colleges and universities must answer for decisions being made on behalf of SOC. White administrators would benefit from the insights, directions, and suggestions by students of color. The solutions posed

by student activists will create conducive atmospheres that will benefit racial minorities and white students. Both conservative and liberal whites should pay close attention to the training programs, funding, workshops, reporting, transparency, and appointments.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Higher education in the U.S. faces many challenges; perhaps the biggest obstacle remains the pervasiveness of systemic and institutional white racism on university and college campuses. Systemic racism and the white racial frame are omnipresent when it comes to critically investigating the social mechanisms that perpetuate white supremacy on campuses. These theories help articulate and uncover the hidden curriculum of racism that has become a normalized feature of the college experience. The data and findings presented in this dissertation indicate an on-going presents of oppression, exploitation, and dehumanization taking place on college campus across the U.S. The student demands highlight the current sentiment regarding student challenges to white racism. Combined with the detailed study of 60 undergraduate Latina/o/x students this project underscores the permanence of racism. Systemic racism further explains that racism is foundational and deeply embedded in American institutions; higher education is no different. Racism is transfixed into the very fabric of higher learning and becomes reproduced in curriculum, space, and experience. Therefore, the majority of those in power, white male elites, must enact widespread bureaucratic and institutional changes that provide real equality, freedom, and justice. Those that stand the most to gain need to examine their white privilege and reassess their role in perpetuating systems of oppression that dramatically impact the lives of people of color.

The racialized experiences of students of color go against the positive narratives surrounding degree attainment. College is routinely discussed and encouraged to young people starting at an early age. Children grow up being told by authority figures, i.e. parents, teachers, and school officials, to attend college and earn a bachelor's degree. Going to college is one of the primary messages young people hear as they enter into their teens and eventually adulthood. However, the discourse surrounding the idea of college, encompasses economic security, opportunity, intelligence, and personal/family pride. Nowhere in the prevailing mainstream discourses on "college" are their discussions about systemic racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression. For students of color their experiences often contradict narratives, stories, and ideals that promote higher education. Popular images of college often reiterate a diverse, equal, and racially harmonious experience. Pictures, films, television shows, and especially college/university propaganda promote a false representation that hides the true realities of campus life. Racial hostility, discrimination, and colorblind ideology are more akin to the experiences of SOC. The serene learning environments portrayed in college media discourses do not accurately show what college life is like for students of color and tend to misinform students rather provide them information to make informed and important life decisions.

As described throughout this dissertation project Latina/o/x have a hard time transitioning from their home culture to college/university culture and encounter many instances of overt and covert racism. Some students are able to handle racism better than others; however, some do not have the social and cultural capital to deal with white

antagonism. The fact that students of color continue to face racial hostility says a lot not only about their respective colleges but society overall. SOC living in their home communities are part of anti-violence police protests and continue to have connections to victims and endure similar pains and police practices. These young people have courageously fought back by organizing effective social media campaigns and challenging local authorities. Many of these same young people attend college and have brought attention to systemic racism in both the justice system and the education system. Although Black students have largely been the face of the campus protest movement (rightfully so) Latinx students have also been instrumental in employing counter-framing to combat racism on their campuses. Latina/o/x undergraduates have stood against white supremacy and worked with Black students and other students of color particularly in the Southwest.

Latinx students have a long history of educational protest and demanding relevant courses, faculty of color, and adequate resources. As the Latinx student population continues to increase, enrollment will also see slight increases, therefore it is critical university and college administrators and staff workers meet this challenge and work with the communities they serve. Students of color in particular endure racial aggressions (major and minor) on university and colleges campuses. These white institutional spaces often ostracize and marginalize people of color by demeaning, ignoring, and tolerating them. Despite systemic forms of racism and sexism SOC are able to thrive and graduate. Not that there are not obstacles along the way, again, racial oppression remains fundamental to their everyday experiences in higher education, but

Latina/o students regularly overcome, survive, and succeed. The next three sections continue the discussion and conversations regarding the Latina/o/x student experiences and student of color activists demands.

Transition

Students from all backgrounds experience some form of culture shock the transition from their home communities to the university or college setting. Culture shock is even more pronounced when students must move to another city or far away from where they grow up leaving their family and friends behind. Latina/o/x students at PWIs experience culture shock differently than other students. The students in this study experienced the traditional feelings of culture shock such as isolation, loneliness, and anxiety. First-generation and Spanish speaking students, for example, students expressed missing Mexican and other Latinx dishes and speaking Spanish on a daily basis. Those that were from lower economic class backgrounds had to overcome issues concerned with class as well. Furthermore, Latinx undergraduates often do not have the same cultural and social capital as their fellow white counterparts, as a result, they must learn as they go along putting them at a disadvantage. The lack of availability resources and knowledge about potential resources adds to their feelings of marginality. Dealing with adverse professors and other students can be a daunting task especially if students of color do not have much experiences with whites and vice versa.

Mentoring, transitional programs, and spaces for Latina/o/x will help students feel comfortable, fit into campus life, and succeed academically. Mentoring programs involving faculty, staff, and community members will help Latinx students become

integrated into the university/college. Staff and faculty members can help students understanding higher academics, traverse the educational system, and obtain cultural capital. Transitional programs that support students coming from communities of color require trained professionals privy to the needs of SOC. Cultivating positive campus environments need to be prioritized by college and university administrators. Students of color should enter college spaces with the expectations to be treated equally, fairly, and without bias. Furthermore, new student orientation workshops and programs designed for Latinx students will enhance their college experience and provide students the tools necessary to deal with culture shock and ultimately make the transition to successful college students.

On and off Campus Experiences and Activities

Students recounted stories about racial microaggressions, white spaces, and overt forms of racism as they traversed their educational journeys. Latina/o/x student experienced racial microaggressions in the form of looks, stares, and dismissive facial expressions. They were also routinely silenced and ignored in their interactions with staff members, and faculty. Even their equals were hostile to their presents, white students frequently treated Latinx as less prepared, inadequate, and foreign. Not belonging is a common feeling many Latinx students feel on predominantly white campuses. The students were asked what activities they participated in during their free time. Latinx students take part in the traditional campus activities such as Greek life, intramural sports, exercising, eating out, and partying. One of the important findings in this dissertation revealed that Latinx students encounter racism whether their on or off

campus. Therefore, the campus community extends into the local community and racism endures within the confines of the classroom and beyond. Administrators and other university/college employees need to recognize the unique experiences of Latinx students and devise curriculum, programs, and workshops that reduce racial oppression and systemic racism.

Student Demands

Student activists of color across seventy-eight colleges and universities have generated lists of demands they have presented to their schools. Many of their demands are intertwined with the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. Black, Latina/o/x, Asian, Indigenous, bi-racial, multi-racial, and other students of color adhere to the directives of the BLM movement and bring the same energy to college campuses. Their concerns directly challenge systemic and institutional racism, SOC across the U.S. have come together to rally against racial oppression. The present student protest movement rose from violent police killings of young Black men and women. The murders of Black and Latinx young men and women at the hands of police officers are all too familiar occurrences. The future of higher education lays in a concerted effort from students, staff, faculty, and administrators. Unfortunately for the sake of the entire academic community, students have been the main proponents of change but often face resistance from school officials. Students of color have been at the forefront of demanding racial equality and justice. There have been some strides made in recent decades but the root of the problem remains, the experiences and insights of SOC are frequently diminished. The end goal for student activists of color is to make colleges and universities,

productive, encouraging, safe spaces that harvest knowledge free from unconducive Eurocentric ideologies and epistemologies.

Over the past academic school years students of color throughout the U.S. and some parts of Canada have chosen to rise up and voice their concerns against numerous forms of oppression. White racial oppression was centralized in the student demands. The SOC offered and suggested numerous solutions to help eradicate and minimize racial incidents on and off campus. The most popular solutions included: increased funding for ethnic study departments, accountability and oversight, safe spaces, and additional staff and faculty of color. The student activists demands counter many of the racial issues professed by the participants in this study. Creating spaces for dialogue and instituting mandatory racial sensitivity and awareness progress will help education white students. Informing white students about the cultural background of students of color will begin to dismantle racial oppression, white privilege, and the racial hierarchy. Latina/o/x undergraduate students along with other students of color have fought against racism, provided strategies to overcome oppression, and made personal sacrifices to make our colleges and society truly democratic and free.

Policies and Programs

Policymakers, college and university leadership, and administrators would learn much from simply listening to the lived experiences of Latinx and other students of color. Concentrated programs addressing inequalities in higher education are needed to fulfill the process of inclusion, diversity, and equality for students, staff, and faculty from all racial backgrounds. Racial discrimination remains a fixture at predominantly

white colleges and universities and the concerns of SOC are often ignored or diminished. The dissertation findings highlight what campuses are really like for Latinx and other SOC. Thus, educators dedicated to creating hospitable and supportive spaces for students must consider they can implement programs into their institutions. The following policy recommendations and suggestions for action are based on the voices and agency of students of color:

> 1. Listen, understand, and adhere to the narratives of Latinx and SOC experiences on campuses. Administrators must seriously address racial discrimination and work with students, staff, and faculty to understand the complexities, struggles, and socio-historical context of race on their campuses. Acknowledging systemic racism and listening to the experiences of POC will help improve campus climate. Anti-racism programs, workshops, and courses should recognize and address white racial hostility and provide ways to severely minimize or reduce racial tensions. Incentive based programs, diversity initiatives, and other well intentioned actions must be supplemented with foundational changes. Cultivating a truly equal campus environment should be a core principal, a tradition, and part of the university's identity and future direction. Improving the racial climate will help universities and colleges recruit, retain, and ultimately graduate Latinx students (Hurtado and Carter, 1997).
>
> 2. Mentoring programs focused on the transitional cultural and social phase for Latinx students. Especially students coming from racially segregated communities of color. Mentoring programs in particular have proven to increase the retention rates, graduation rates, and overall educational experiences of Latinx undergraduate students. Therefore, university-level mentoring programs designed to address the specific educational and professional interests of Latinx students remain vital to the long-term success of the individual, college, and community (Cox et al. 2014; Phinney et al. 2011; Zalaquett and Lopez 2006; Bordes and Arredono 2005). Programs should focus on the historical legacy of colonialism and the impact residential segregation, the prison industrial complex, and economic exploitation have on students of color.
>
> 3. Campus climate and campus space directly effects the recruitment, attainment, and graduate rates of SOC. There and numerous studies that show how Latinx and other students of color are often excluded from

campus life (Yosso and Benavides Lopez, 2010; Gloria and Castellanos, 2003; González, 2002; Feagin, Vera, and Imani, 1996). The findings from this study reveal that white space negatively impacts In fact, Latinx often create counterspaces to share their racialized and gendered experiences as a direct response to racial hostility on campus (Yosso and Benavides Lopez, 2010; Yosso et al., 2009; Flores and Garcia, 2009). Universities and colleges would be better served if they created physical spaces for students to gather, socialize, and study. Spaces around campus that are designated for SOC will help foster an inclusive environment. Other areas on-campus may include artwork, murals, statutes, and other signifies that Latinx and SOC are included, accepted, and celebrated as part of the college or university.

4. An important strategy for addressing racism and racial discrimination would be to dramatically alter and overhaul faculty hiring practices. Equalizing hiring practices in higher education in order to increasing faculty of color is a significant step in the right direction (Ibarra, 2003). Nationwide the amount of faculty of color is not proportionately to their population numbers, at the very least, universities and colleges should strive for this marker. It is also worth noting that existing faculty of color are often overextended (i.e. the token faculty of color), they are often expected to cater to all the needs of students, departments, and university service requirements. Consequently, increasing and retaining faculty of color will enhance the experiences of SOC as well as the curriculum. Feagin (2002: 25) states that racially effective courses must "provide a complete and critical education for all college students in regard to the nation's racial and ethnic history, including the historical and contemporary realities of racial prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination." Courses centered on race and other forms of oppression will help make recruiting students of color easier. Furthermore, curriculum beyond the classroom should entail anti-racism programming, racial awareness training for students, faculty, and staff, and community partnerships.

These are some of the key recommendations for educational leaders and administers to consider in order to promote greater equality on historically white campuses. Stemming from the data generated from this dissertation these strategies are designed to promote social justice, enhance democracy, and improve systems of higher education. Virtually every university and college in the U.S. would improve their campus climate if they

implemented the policy recommendations described above: contextualizing the experiences of POC, developing mentoring programs, establishing spaces of color, increasing faculty of color, and teaching racially conscious curriculum. These initiatives are long overdue and require effort from all levels, but most importantly from those at the top of the college/university hierarchical power structure.

Theoretical Contributions

Institutional spaces at traditional and historical white colleges and universities significantly alter the lived realities of students of color. The concept of white space refers to the physical, symbolic, and ideological constructs of whiteness and often acts a battleground for exclusion, isolation, and boundary making. Findings from this dissertation study add to the theoretical underpinnings of the concept of white space. Latinx students experienced white racism in the confines of white space outside and inside the university. The culture of universities and colleges similar to SU extend beyond campus life and permeate the community at-large. As a result, students living, working, and socializing off campus continue to face white spaces, ideologies, and racial discrimination. Respondents reported facing overt and covert acts of racism while in class, exercising at the gym, eating out, and while participating in various other activities. Therefore, based on student narratives, white space entails more than the physical space (i.e. artwork, people, and statutes) the shadow of the university looms over the community and into spaces beyond campus. Consequently, students experience issues concerning race in the classroom, on-campus, and in the surrounding community. Their racial identities become blended with the institution, Latinx students bring their

complex racial identities to their home communities and often face issues dealing with social mobility and social class among their peers, friends, family, and community members. This study highlights that white space remains an integral part of student experiences one they encounter, endure, and carry with them long after graduation. Furthermore, investigating leisure activities or student activities are important areas of research and add to critical theories in higher education. What activities Latinx students participate in their free time reveals their social position, act as sites of resistance, and contribute to their educational attainment. Critical race scholars in education, policymakers, and educational leaders focused on creating conducive spaces of learning need to better understand the nuances associated with student activities. Latinx student activities operating in white spaces often encounter racial hostility but also create counterspaces to resist white supremacy.

Conclusion

The findings from this dissertation study highlight the racialized experiences, activities, transitions, and demands of students of color. Latina/o/x in particular require better conditions that concentrate on reducing institutionalized forms of racism. It is clear from the evidence presented in chapters 2-4 that race and racism are a point of contention for Latinas/os and white students, faculty, and staff. Other students of color, specifically Black students deal with the same sort of racial issues as their Latina/o counterparts. The nature of white spaces are often conducive for white students and create uncomfortable, unsafe spaces for SOC. The future success of colleges and SOC requires a collaboration effort between the campus community and the local community.

This includes the restructuring of graduation requirements that include racial awareness education and anti-racism instruction. Critical education focused on deconstructing white supremacy and providing whites the space to interrogate their racial privilege will break down barriers that negatively affect people of color.

Ultimately this project was intended to argue that colleges need to reassess and critique their practices in order to reinvent sustainable institutions capable of truly including people from all backgrounds. Students of color raised in the U.S. often internalize racism and adhere to the conventional and popular white interpretations of their history. American ideals, values, ethnics, and morals are socially engrained into the minds of SOC without any alternative or critical viewpoints. As a result of this socialization, students of color have a perverted sense of themselves and are made to think that their culture, language, and ways of being are inferior. Recording Latinx voices and analyzing the students of color demands is one way to counter the prevailing narratives about students of color in higher education. This study also offers a counter-narrative to those that do not believe racism and oppression exist on university and college campuses. SOC share their experiences, insights, suggestions, and provide a counter-frame to hegemonic white cultural practices of racial exclusion.

After reading this dissertation, there are three points of interest that academics, students, staff, faculty, community members, and legislators should take away -- the problems of, need for, and solutions for overcoming racism. The three separate core chapters are represented below, and each point is a reference to the findings in those chapters. Two of the chapters focus strictly on the educational experiences of Latinx

undergraduates and how they navigate in white educational spaces. The third core chapter centers on the Black, Latinx, and other students of color (and a few of their white allies) requests and mandates for change based on racial animosity. The points below cover the racialized, cultural, and counter-framing experiences and insights of students of color:

> 1. The transitionary process between the home culture and the college culture can be challenging for Latina/o/x coming from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Residential segregation, lack of high school resources, over-policing in their neighborhoods, and few employment opportunities contribute to the culture shock students face when transitioning to college especially predominantly white institutions. Therefore, large-scale mentoring programs targeting Latinx students are essential for students of color. Ethnic and Gender study programs such as Chicana/o/x Studies, Latina/o/x Studies, African American/Black Studies, Women and Gender Studies are increasingly important in a multicultural society and world.
>
> 2. Racism remains systemic to U.S. public and private colleges and universities. People of color, particularly Latina/o/x undergraduate students face overt and covert racism on a daily basis while on and off campus. As the largest racial group in the U.S. Latinx students are in need of academic support that addresses real cultural tolerance, racialization, critical curriculum, mental health, and Additional resources, programs, and funding should concentrate on developing and cultivating Latina/o/x students rather than excluding, rejecting, and marginalizing them. Training future Latinx leaders, innovators, and contributors to society requires that colleges must be open, friendly, safe, anti-racist, anti-discriminatory, assault-free spaces of learning and growing. True diversity rather than pseudo-diversity is a tangible goal that all universities and colleges should strive to obtain.
>
> 3. Students of color, particularly Black and Latinx undergraduate students, have the desire, inclination, and capacity to change university and college settings for the better. These students are using their political capital to negotiate their place in the college and university setting. Furthermore, whites in positions of substantial influence should listen and adhere to student demands. Racism on-campus is endemic to the entire educational system; however, change can occur at the micro, meso, and macro levels. Many fixes and solutions are already exist; university and

> college administrators, politicians, and community members must prioritize inclusion, respect, and true diversity.

These three points address larger issues that are rarely talked about in conversations about higher education such as power, control, money, and political interest. Underlining these systems of oppression are white racist justifications for exploiting, mistreating, and the outright harming of people of color. Inside and outside academia whites utilize the white racial frame to rationalize their role in reproducing and sustaining systemic racism. Undergraduate students of color employed a counter-frame to the white racial framing of the world and challenged systemic racism and white supremacy through petition, protest, sit-ins, hunger strikes, and ultimatums. People of color have a long and strong history of resisting racism and do more to challenge, resist, and change racial conditions. The solutions presented in this dissertation and articulated in the three points are intended to improve educational structures and address the concerns of SOC.

The freshman college class nationwide has continued to grow, and that means students have an opportunity to learn new ways of seeing the world. The re-socialization process for many students begins in college. Educators have a responsibility and obligation to create safe spaces of learning for all students regardless of their racial and ethnic background. However, there are substantial inequalities based on racial identity that systematically impact student performance. This dissertation has documented the difficulties students of color have faced, particularly among Latina/o/x, and argues for a focused approach that considers and addresses race, in order to improve the educational systems for all students, employees, and community members. Educators should be motivated to correct the racial transgressions that were outlined in this study by

providing avenues for student and institutional success. Educators and proponents of democracy and equality welcome a comprehensive reevaluation of the public and private education system. Colleges and universities must do their part to acknowledge, deconstruct, and actively challenge systemic racism in order to create critically engaged students, compassionate adults, and global citizens.

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APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Pseudonym	Identity	Year	Major
1. Isabella	Mexican American	Sophomore	Engineering
2. Valentina	Hispanic	Sophomore	Engineering
3. Santiago	Mexican	Junior	Business
4. Samuel	Hispanic (Mexican origin)	Sophomore	Engineering
5. Alejandro	Mex. Am. and Latino	Senior	Humanities
6. Camila	Mexican American	Freshman	Social Science
7. Diego	Mexican American	Junior	Education
8. Lucas	Mexican American	Junior	Engineering
9. Alexander	Home-state (Mexican origin)	Junior	Engineering
10. David	Mex. Am. and Home-state	Sophomore	Engineering
11. Juan José	Mexican	Senior	Humanities
12. Andrés	Hispanic (Mexican origin)	Senior	Engineering
13. Mariana	Mexican American	Junior	Social Science
14. Daniela	Mexican American	Sophmore	Humanities
15. Victoria	Mexican American	Senior	Science
16. Lucas	Mexican American	Senior	Social Science
17. Tomas	Mexican	Sophomore (left SU)	Business
18. Martín	Latino, and Slavadorean Am.	Sophomore	Social Science
19. Sara	Mexican Am. and Latina	Junior	Applied Science
20. Catalina	Mex. Am., Hispanic, and Latina	Sophomore	Social Science
21. Pablo	Hispanic (Mexican origin)	Junior	Business
22. Ángel	Mexican, Mexican American, Hispanic, Home-State	Super Senior (5 or more years)	Engineering
23. Christopher	Mexican	Senior	Humanities
24. Adrián	Mexican	Junior	Science
25. Manuel	Mexican American	Sophomore	Engineering
26. Emilia	Mexican American	Sophomore	Engineering
27. Felipe	Hispanic, Latino (Salvadoran origin)	Junior	Social Science
28. Samantha	Mexican American, Hispanic	Senior	Business
29. Fernando	Mexican	Senior	Business
30. Ignacio	Hispanic (Mexican origin)	Senior	Applied Science
31. Paula	Mexican	Sophomore	Engineering
32. Julián	Mexican	Senior	Social Science
33. Antonella	Aztec (Mexican origin)	Super Senior (5 or more years)	Humanities
34. Hugo	Mexican, Mexican American, Hispanic	Freshman	Science
35. Mía	Mexican-American, Hispanic	Senior	Social Science
36. Isaac	Hispanic (Mexican origin)	Junior	Education
37. Damián	Mexican American	Senior	Engineering
38. Dante	Mexican American	Sophomore	Business
39. Zoe	Hispanic (Mexican origin)	Junior	Education
40. Nicole	Hispanic (Mexican origin)	Senior	Social Science
41. Aarón	Mexican, Mexican-American	Senior	Business
42. Santino	Salvadorian	Sophomore	Engineering
43. Vicente	Hispanic (Mexican origin)	Senior	Business
44. Matthew	Hispanic (Mexican origin)	Freshman	Engineering
45. Victor	Hispanic (Mexican origin)	Freshman	Engineering
46. Esteban	Hispanic (Mexican origin)	Freshman	Engineering
47. Facundo	Hispanic (Salvadoran origin)	Sophomore	Applied Science
48. Mario	Hispanic (Salvadoran origin)	Sophomore	Engineering
49. Eduardo	Mexican	Freshman	Engineering
50. Mario	Mexican American	Junior	Business
51. Miguel Ángel	Mexican	Junior	Engineering
52. Leo	Hispanic (Mexican origin)	Junior	Applied Science
53. Símon	Hispanic, Home-state, American (Mexican and Filipino origins)	Junior	Applied Science
54. Luana	Hispanic/Latina (Cuban origin)	Junior	Social Science
55. Fátima	Mexican American	Junior	Social Science
56. Salvador	Home-state, Hispanic, American (Mexican origin)	Freshman	Social Science
57. Marc	Mexican-American, Latino, and American	Junior	Social Science
58. Hugo	Mexican, Mexican-American, Hispanic, Latino (Mexican origin)	Sophomore	Engineering
59. Isidora	Mexican-American	Sophomore	Engineering
60. Nancy	Mexican-American, Latina, American	Junior	Science

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

1. How many hours a week are spent on leisure activities?

2. How many of those hours are spent outdoors/indoors?

3. How have your activities changed over the years?

4. Do you have children? If so, what type of leisure activities do you encourage your children to engage in?

5. How has being someone of Mexican, Latina/o descent impacted your choice of activities?

6. What is your primary and secondary leisure activities? Others?

7. If money and time were a non-factor, what type of activities would attract you?

8. Do you feel that all activities whether private or public are assessable to you? Are any leisure activities/facilities restricted to you?

9. Why do Latinas/os participate in certain leisure activities while disregarding others?

10. What activities are unique to your location? What activities are unique to Latinas/os?

APPENDIX C

STUDENT DEMAND LIST

*Name of College or University	Student Organization
1. Amherst College	**#AmherstUprising
2. Atlanta University Center Consortium (Spelman, Morehouse, Clark Atlanta, ITC)	#AUCShutitDown
3. Babson College	Origins of Necessary Equality (O.N.E.)
4. Bard College	Bard College Students of Color
5. Beloit College	Black Student United, Voces Latinas, SIC
6. Boston College	Eradicate #BostonCollegeRacism
7. Brandeis University	Concerned Graduate Students of Color
8. Brown University	Concerned Students 2015
9. California State University, East Bay	#BlackAtTheBay
10. California State University, Los Angeles	CSLA Black Student Union
11. California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo	SLO Solidarity
12. Claremont McKenna College	Students of Color at Claremont McKenna College
13. Clemson University	See The Stripes
14. Colgate University	Association of Critical Collegians
15. Dartmouth College	Concerned Asian, Black, Latin@, Native, Undocumented, Queer, and Differently-Abled students
16. Duke University	Black Voices
17. Eastern Michigan University	Black Students at Eastern Michigan University
18. Emory University	Black Students at Emory University
19. Georgia Southern University	GSU NAACP Student Chapter
20. Grinnell College	Multicultural Leadership Council
21. Guilford College	***N/A (“Coalition of Student Activists”)
22. Harvard University	Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health students and Law Students
23. Iowa State University	LUCHA
24. Ithaca College	People of Color Ithaca
25. Johns Hopkins University	John Hopkins University Black Student Union
26. Kennesaw State University	Black Students at Kennesaw State University
27. Lawrence University	Students of Color at Lawrence University
28. Lewis and Clark College	Lewis & Clark Black Lives Matter
29. Loyola University Maryland	Concerned Students of Color at Loyola University Maryland
30. Michigan State University	#liberatemsu
31. Middle Tennessee State University	N/A (“a group of students, faculty, and community members”)
32. Mississippi State University	Coalition of Black Students
33. Missouri State University	Students of Color at Missouri State University
34. New York University	Students of Color of New York University
35. Notre Dame of Maryland University	Concerned Students of Notre Dame of Maryland University
36. Occidental College	Oxy United for Black Liberation
37. Portland State University	Portland State BSU
38. Providence College	The Coalition Against Racism, Women Empowered, Society Organized Against Racism, Brotherhood, and the NAACP

Name of College or University	Student Organization
39. Purdue University	"Student Protestors" "Some Members of Purdue Social Justice Coalition"
40. San Francisco State University	SFSU Black Student Union
41. Santa Clara University	#Unity4
42. Sarah Lawrence College	Students of Color at Sarah Lawrence
43. Simmons College	Students of Color at Simmons College
44. Southern Methodist University	Concerned Members of the Black Community at SMU
45. St. Louis Christian College	N/A ("students")
46. St. Louis University	#OccupySLU
47. SUNY Potsdam	Potsdam Oppressed Working Every Resource (POWER)
48. Towson University	Black Students at Towson University
49. Tufts University	#TheThreePercent
50. University of Alabama	#wearedone
51. University of Baltimore	People of Color Coalition
52. University of California, Berkeley	UC Berkeley Black Student Union
53. University of California, Irvine	Black Student Union
54. UCLA	Afrikan Student Union
55. University of Cincinnati	#thelrate8
56. University of Guelph	University of Guelph Black Students
57. University of Kansas	Rock Chalk Invisible Halk
58. University of Michigan	#BBUM
59. University of Minnesota	Whose Diversity? Collective
60. University of Missouri	#ConcernedStudent1950
61. University of North Carolina at Greensboro	"Students, Faculty, Staff, Alumni, and Community at UNCG"
62.University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Silent Sam Coalition
63. University of Oregon	OU Black Student Task Force
64. University of Ottawa	BlakCollectiv and the Student Federation
65. University of Puget Sound	The Advocates for Institutional Change
66. University of San Diego	Concerned Students at USD
67. University of San Francisco	USF Black Student Union
68. University of South Carolina	USC 2020 Vision
69. University of Southern California	USC Undergraduate Student Government
70. University of Toronto	Coalition of Black Students
71. University of Virginia	Black Student Alliance
72. University of Wyoming	#BreakthrUWYO
73. Vanderbilt University	Hidden Dores
74. Virginia Commonwealth University	Black VCU Speaks
75. Washington University in St. Louis	Washington University Students in Solidarity
76. Webster University	The Association for African American Collegians
77. Wesleyan University Demands	Ujamaa (Wesleyan's Black Student Union)
78. Yale University	Next Yale

*The lists were compiled from www.thedemands.org
** Students posted their demands on social media, the "#" symbol pertains to twitter.
***Note: The student organizations designated as N/A (not available) are usually comprised of a coalition of students of color from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, abilities, and identities. Similar groups tend to use "students of color" or "concerned students."